



# EAST PRESTON PARISH COUNCIL

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## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES:** of the Committee Meeting held on Monday, 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2026 at East Preston Infant School, Lashmar Road, East Preston at 19:00

**PRESENT:** Councillors Andrea Chapman, Lisa Duff, Helen Hill, Elizabeth Linton (Chairman), David Moore and Steve Toney

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

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The following abbreviations may appear in these Minutes:

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

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

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The meeting opened at 18:58.

### **210/26 APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE**

All committee members were present.

### **211/26 PERSONAL AND/OR PECUNIARY/PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS**

No declarations were made.

### **212/26 PUBLIC SESSION**

No members of the public were present.

### **213/26 WARM WELCOME SPACE 2026**

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

## **Warm Welcome Space 2026**

**Committee is asked to review progress with this initiative.**

The grant received from Arun District Council was for £1,000.

At the time of writing, we have hosted ten sessions, with a further two scheduled. The average attendance has been 24.

As a parting gift for attendees, Cllr Linton is hoping to source small spring plants, possibly daffodils this year.

I have said to attendees we would survey them at the end of the season to ask their preferred day of the week, no promises made. A few have said Wednesday has not been good for them, and I know The Baytree Community Lunch Club cancelled its March coffee morning – always the second Wednesday of the month – because it did not think it would get sufficient attendance.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

17<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Cllr Linton reported 32 members of the public had attended the session on 18<sup>th</sup> March. She would buy 35 bunches of daffodils, one each to be given to each attendee at the final session of the year, 25<sup>th</sup> March.

Although Cllr Duff had not been aware of it at the session she had overseen, Cllrs Chapman, Hill and Linton all mentioned the number of attendees turning up later than ideal, the number of attendees seeming to change their mind about which soup they had ordered, the number of attendees just generally slightly taking advantage, taking the sessions a little for granted. This might be something to be borne in mind when the committee considered whether or not to run sessions in 2027. Apparently, there was some talk by the British Legion it would run sessions in 2027, at a small charge as the £6.30 the council paid was less than the Legion itself would sell soup and a roll and a hot drink for. Cllr Linton had suggested to the Legion they could start to offer such sessions from October in case the council decided to offer sessions for January to March again, that would result in the sessions being available for six months. Depending upon how the Legion marketed the sessions, it too would be eligible to apply for an Arun District Council grant, assuming the latter organisation offered grants again. The parish council could also be applied to for a grant.

Cllr Chapman said she enjoyed the Warm Welcome Space sessions as they provided her with an opportunity to connect with and chat to residents with whom she might not otherwise have that opportunity.

The committee AGREED unanimously the Clerk should ask attendees at the final session some questions, without prejudice, as to which days of the week regular attendees would prefer, which soup flavours they liked most and disliked most.

The Clerk reported Lancing Parish Council had very recently successfully hosted an afternoon cream tea in its Community Hub. It planned to make this a monthly event. The Clerk suggested this could be an idea the parish council could adopt as an alternative to Warm Welcome Space lunches, perhaps.

## 214/26 PLAYSCHEMES

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

### 2026 Playschemes

#### **Committee is asked to continue consideration of any 2026 playschemes.**

At the last meeting, it was agreed Cllr Duff should obtain prices from the following two companies: [Tom's Talking Reptiles](#) and [Wild Science](#). There is £600 in the budget. These prices should enable the committee to make a decision.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

17<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Cllr Duff reported she had spoken to both companies and been advised of the following costings: Tom's Talking Reptiles, £360 for a two-hour session for up to 12 children with parents; Wild Science, £719 for a whole day open session.

The committee AGREED unanimously Cllr Duff should ask Tom's Talking Reptiles whether it would offer two one-hour sessions, aimed at primary school age children, thus the council could offer 24 children a chance to attend. The committee further AGREED unanimously, this should take place on either Tuesday, 27<sup>th</sup> or Wednesday, 28<sup>th</sup> October, a morning activity. Cllr Toney said he would ascertain the availability of the Scout Hall for those days, between 09:00 and 14:00,

giving Tom's Talking Reptiles time to set up and dismantle. The committee AGREED unanimously to charge a nominal £3 per child with no charge for the accompanying adult.

Cllr Duff would follow this up with Tom's Talking Reptiles. Wild Science could be kept in mind for a future event.

#### **215/26 BEACH CLEANS 2026**

Cllr Linton reported she had had an accidental meeting with Sue Hickey of KEPT in Sainsburys, during which various aspects of the beach clean and its future had been discussed. Cllr Linton had said council representatives would be on hand on 29<sup>th</sup> March to guide KEPT to the running of the event with a view to KEPT leading solo from the September event. The committee AGREED the Clerk would purchase the biscuits for this event. No hot drinks would be available on this occasion as the new owners of the SALT kiosk were not planning on being open in time and had not replied to the Clerk's email about the beach clean. Cllrs Chapman, Duff, Linton and Toney all planned to attend as did the Clerk, and should assemble at the Council Office at 10:30 to help carry kit to the beach.

#### **216/26 EAST PRESTON FESTIVAL, 5<sup>TH</sup> TO 14<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2026**

The following report was circulated in advance of the meeting:

### **East Preston Festival, 5<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> June 2026**

The theme for this year's Festival is *East Preston Goes Wild*.

All the paperwork has been completed which includes the spiel for the programme.

In addition to the events listed below, Andrew Cook has agreed to run three one-hour free tennis coaching sessions on behalf of the council and using the council's tennis court at the Warren Recreation Ground. These sessions are on 5<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> June, times vary. Andrew's insurance covers these sessions.

**Committee to asked to consider any matters pertaining to *Come and Meet Your Local Councillors on Saturday, 6<sup>th</sup> June, running from 10:00 until 12:00*.** Alison is still trying to source tables and chairs for use on the day (and at the Food & Drink Festival). Councillors will be needed from 09:30 until 12:30 to help set up and dismantle.

**Committee is asked to consider any matters pertaining to *mini-golf on the Village Green on 9<sup>th</sup> June*.** I have contacted the company and confirmed all is still ok for the event. Apart from publicity, there is nothing else for us to do at the moment. Cllr Linton has asked councillors to attend the event if they can, just as a presence.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

17<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Cllr Linton confirmed the council would be responsible for further advertising of the tennis coaching sessions.

Cllr Chapman reported Alison had purchased some chairs for the council to use at events such as *Come and Meet Your Local Councillors* and the Food & Drink Festival. As storage was potentially a problem, fold-up chairs were preferred but they had their limitations. Committee members were asked to visit the Council Office to consider the two designs of chairs Alison had purchased to date. Alison had also purchased some fold-up tables for use at these events. Most committee members confirmed they would be available to help with setting up for *Come and Meet Your Local Councillors* and dismantling afterwards.

The Clerk reminded councillors the mini-golf event had been agreed as running from 16:00 to 19:00 because the committee expected it to be popular. Cllr Linton said committee members were all welcome to take part in the golf, but mainly they would be needed to ensure anyone waiting did not become disorderly.

#### **217/26 ST MARY THE VIRGIN CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL, 11<sup>TH</sup> TO 13<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2026**

The following report was circulated in advance of the meeting:

# **St Mary the Virgin Christmas Tree Festival, 11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup>** **December**

**Committee is asked to consider the council having a tree in this year's Christmas Tree Festival.**

Cllrs Chapman and Duff have previously led on this item.

Invitations have not been sent yet, but I know these are the correct dates for this year's Christmas Tree Festival. If the council would like a tree this year, which councillor(s) would like to lead the council's effort?

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

17<sup>th</sup> March 2026

The committee AGREED unanimously the council should again take part in the Christmas Tree Festival. The committee ACCEPTED the offer of Cllrs Chapman and Duff to be the lead councillors for this event. Cllr Linton suggested Cllrs Chapman and Duff might like to bring their initial ideas for the tree's decorations to the committee's next meeting.

## **218/26 CHRISTMAS LIGHTING**

The following report was circulated in advance of the meeting:

### **Christmas Lighting**

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

Cllr Linton to lead on this item.

I believe Dawn has now received confirmation the installation at Two Acres is complete. The lighting company knows this.

As far as I know, nothing further has been heard from the northern shops about where they would like a Christmas tree.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

17<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Cllr Linton suggested the council look at providing Christmas lighting around the palm trees at the northern end of the northern shopping area. This was dependent upon Enerveo providing access to electricity close to those trees. The Christmas lighting company was already aware of the council's desire to provide lighting to these trees. The Clerk would attempt to galvanise Enerveo into rapid action.

## **219/26 YOUTH PROVISION**

The following report was circulated in advance of the meeting:

### **Youth provision**

**Committee is asked to receive any update on work undertaken in conjunction with Angmering and Rustington Parish Councils.**

I have now attended three meetings of this group now, the first with Cllr Duff, the second with Cllr Chapman, the third alone! A Rustington parish councillor has designed a website which, when viewed on a mobile phone, would look and feel like an app. Initially, the group thinks this would cost each council approximately £200 to run, although it was suggested each council sets aside £500 for the first year. There would be a single website covering the three villages and local organisations offering events for children up to the age of 18 would be

invited to provide information for use on the website. That information would be equally available to children and their adults. I would suggest initially any expenditure comes from the East Preston Youth Centre accounts.

With Helen Holt, publisher of *All About* magazines, I investigated the possibility of an *All About Youth* version. Despite the initial positivity about the idea, in discussion it became evident the idea could prove expensive and complicated, so the group has moved away from that idea now.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

17<sup>th</sup> March 2026

The Clerk reported this was progressing as per the above report. Any initial funding from East Preston would come from the £14,000 Cllrs Chapman and Duff confirmed was in the East Preston Youth Centre bank account. (The bank account might be frozen, so it may be the council needed to pay initially and be reimbursed by the Youth Centre.) Cllrs Chapman and Duff said they liked the idea of the three villages working together and hoped this would be a positive step for local youth provision.

## 220/26 NEWSLETTER – SPRING 2026

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

### Newsletter – Spring 2026

#### **Committee is asked to consider content for Newsletter No. 78, Spring 2026.**

The Spring newsletter is usually delivered during May.

This issue always carries the chairman's annual report and two Festival previews, one from us, one from the Festival Committee.

From the current issue, we may follow up on the 20mph and grass verges articles and, presumably, we will begin a series of articles on the redevelopment of 118-120 Sea Road. Cllr Chapman has asked for space for an article about taking photographs for a future calendar. Our guest reporter is writing about the Horticultural Society for us. South Strand Community Toilets has submitted an article too.

What else might we include?

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

17<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Cllr Chapman suggested an article on food recycling as residents seemed confused about what could and could not be recycled. The committee was wary of publishing this council's own interpretation of the guidance in case that caused yet more confusion. If there was a clear ADC article which could be reproduced, that could be an option.

Cllr Chapman AGREED to write an article on environmentally-friendly spring cleaning.

The Clerk said there was still time for other suggestions to be made for inclusion in the Spring 2026 Newsletter.

Cllr Toney said he would approach the two new fire officers at East Preston Fire Station for an article for the Summer 2026 Newsletter, once they had settled in a bit.

## 221/26 BLUE PLAQUES

The following report was circulated in advance of the meeting:

### Blue plaques

**Committee is asked to continue consideration of the case for Miss Winifred Scott, a former resident of Sea Lane.**

At the committee's last meeting, it was agreed I should make initial contact with the householder, Alison Wilkinson.

On 28<sup>th</sup> January, Alison emailed, "Having consulted with the family, I am very happy to agree with the possible siting of a Blue Plaque on my house to commemorate Winifred Jessie Scott. It will be great for the house to be part of the local history."

I have contacted the blue plaque company for an up-to-date price for a 14" cast aluminium plaque - £525 with delivery at £31.50, both sums excluding VAT. Should I also run the idea past the East Preston & Kingston Preservation Society?

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

17<sup>th</sup> March 2026

The committee AGREED the Clerk should approach East Preston & Kingston Preservation Society for its views on this proposal.

The committee AGREED Full Council should be asked to release the money for this blue plaque.

**222/26 CENTRE FOR AGEING BETTER**

The following report was circulated in advance of the meeting:

**Centre for Ageing Better – Age-friendly Town and Parish Guide**

**Committee is asked to consider any matters arising from the Age-friendly Town and Parish Guide.**

The last meeting agreed interested councillors should meet in the Council Office one afternoon to talk through the document and list what we do, what we could do and what we would never do. I need to find a time for such a meeting.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

17<sup>th</sup> March 2026

The committee AGREED to meet at 14:00 on Wednesday, 15<sup>th</sup> April at the Council Office to begin the proposed walk-through of the document to see what East Preston offered or could offer.

**223/26 EAST PRESTON ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES GROUP**

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

**East Preston Environmental Initiatives Group**

**Committee is asked to consider arranging a meeting of local groups which might have an environmental leaning.**

Public members of the council's former Environmental Initiatives Working Party have continued to meet after the council disbanded the working party. I do not know whether any councillors still attend meetings of the group.

Michał Zarzecki appears to be leading the group and he has approached the council, "In our meetings of the Environment Initiatives Group, it was mentioned that the Parish Council had held a meeting with a group of village sporting clubs. Perhaps we could do the same thing with EP in Bloom, Men in Sheds, The Repair Cafe, The Horticultural Society and any other

groups that may have common interests to coordinate actions and better integrate our ambitions with the PC's efforts?"

Is this something the council would like to initiate, much as it has with the sports clubs meetings.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

17<sup>th</sup> March 2026

The committee AGREED to offer the evening of Monday, 15<sup>th</sup> June to Michal for such a meeting. The committee saw this as a one-off meeting rather than a series of meetings as being undertaken with the sports clubs. The committee BELIEVED Michal's intention for the meeting was to garner additional support for and interest in the Environmental Initiatives Group.

## 224/26 HEARING IMPAIRMENT

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

### Hearing impairment

**Committee is asked to continue consideration of supporting the setting up of a support group in the village for those with hearing impairment and their allies.**

Cllr Hill is the lead on this project.

An article was published in the Winter 2026 newsletter, introducing the idea of a social group within the village for those with hearing impairment. Two residents, Juliet and Marion, had already approached the council loosely about this matter. In response to the newsletter article, a further three wanting to find out more about such a group. A fifth resident, an ally rather than someone with hearing impairment herself, has also put herself forward.

Cllrs Linton and Hill and I had an informal meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> March, to work out the council's next steps in this matter. It was clear just between the three of us there were some strong and differing opinions. We agreed Cllr Hill should meet with the first four interested parties individually first to get some idea of what each is looking for and from that the council can see how it wishes to progress.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

17<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Cllr Linton confirmed Cllr Hill would be meeting with each of the initial interested parties on a one-to-one basis to get a clearer idea of what each of them thought a support group could offer them. The meeting the two councillors had had with the Clerk had very much been of the opinion the group would not be there for helping attendees change their hearing aid batteries, as there were already monthly RNID sessions in Rustington and Angmering for that.

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

### Community Speed Watch

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

The council published an article in the Winter 2026 newsletter asking for opinions on a village-wide 20mph zone. In my head, I have set 31<sup>st</sup> March as the closing date for the survey. At the time of writing, almost 300 have taken part in the survey.

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

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

**225/26 COMMUNITY SPEEDWATCH – 20MPH WORKING PARTY**

The article asking residents for their views on a 20mph one across the village had been published on the front page of the Winter 2026 Newsletter and residents were either responding to the survey online or calling in at the Council Office for an officer to complete the survey online with them. Where members of the public had emailed a response, the Clerk had converted these into online survey replies too. The Clerk would circulate the results as at the end of 31<sup>st</sup> March to all committee members in plenty of time for the 8<sup>th</sup> June meeting.

**226/26 COMMUNITY SPEEDWATCH – SPEED INDICATION DEVICES**

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

**227/26 DEFIBRILLATORS**

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

**Defibrillator**

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

I have finally drafted an initial Memorandum of Understanding and I have shared that with Cllr Toney for him to share with his Fire Station contact.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

17<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Cllr Toney confirmed he had shared the draft Memorandum of Understanding with the Station Master and awaited his reply.

**228/26 CORPORATE STATIONERY**

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

**Corporate stationery**

**Committee is asked to consider whether or not to update the council’s corporate stationery.**

At the last meeting, Cllrs Chapman and Duff asked whether it would be possible to see the blue design with a yellow line at the bottom. Here it is for the headed notepaper:



What do councillors think? At the last meeting, I said full council would need to approve any decision made by this committee, but I no longer think that would be necessary.

For comparison, here is the blue on blue version:



As requested, I emailed Cllr Linton's contact to thank him for his designs and to say we would not be using them on this occasion.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

17<sup>th</sup> March 2026

On behalf of the council, the committee AGREED to order stationery using the design with the yellow line. General feeling was this was a brighter, perkier design than the all blue design.

#### **229/26 EAST PRESTON CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS FIREWORKS**

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

### **East Preston Christmas Celebrations fireworks**

**Committee is asked to consider the fate of the 2025 East Preston Christmas Celebrations fireworks.**

Cllr Linton to lead on this item.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

17<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Cllr Linton reported the Clerk had contacted the Headteacher at the Junior School which was celebrating its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. The Headteacher had thanked the council for its offer of the fireworks and said he would raise this offer at the PTA's AGM later this week.

#### **230/26 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY**

The draft Minutes of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> November had been circulated to all members on 20<sup>th</sup> January asking for suggested amendments by 27<sup>th</sup> January. No changes had been suggested, but Cllr Moore had written, "Simon, I have carefully read through the Minutes and found them to be true reflection of the meeting."

The committee AGREED unanimously the Minutes could be signed as a true record of the meeting which had taken place on 19<sup>th</sup> January and Cllr Linton duly completed this task.

#### **231/26 UPDATE ON MATTERS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

The following report was circulated in advance of the meeting:

## **Matters Arising from previous meetings**

**Minute 054/26 – Newsletter – Winter 2026** – the newsletter did indeed stretch to eight pages. Cllr Linton was able to sign off on 9<sup>th</sup> February, three days ahead of schedule. Delivery started on time on 23<sup>rd</sup> February.

**Minute 057/26 – 2026 East Preston Calendar** – all 99 sale copies did sell, with the 100<sup>th</sup> copy being kept back as an archive copy. We did lose so will need to charge probably £7 a copy next time, as awkward a sum as that is.

**Minute 066/26 – New items for the next meeting (23<sup>rd</sup> March 2026) – dog walking field** – I did go back to the man looking for land for a secure dog walking field but heard nothing further from him.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

17<sup>th</sup> March 2026

**Minute 057/26 – 2026 East Preston Calendar** – the committee AGREED with Cllr Linton it needed to calculate the costs of the 2028 calendar better to ensure it was priced to break even, at least, should all copies be sold.

### 232/26 **PARKED PROJECTS**

The following paper was circulated in advance of the meeting:

### **Parked projects**

**Committee is asked to note the committee’s currently parked projects such as any wellbeing projects, St John Ambulance First Aid training, and Blue Billboard.**

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

17<sup>th</sup> March 2026

The committee AGREED all councillors should be offered the chance for a First Aid course. The committee also AGREED The Clerk should ask WSALC whether it was offering any First Aid courses these days. Cllrs Linton and Duff wistfully remembered the WSALC First Aid course they had attended at Warnham Deer Park.

Although not strictly a Community Engagement matter, Cllr Chapman asked for a quick discussion on the matter of flowers for the forthcoming *Funday Sunday* event. In line with the council ideal to be environmentally-friendly and need to draw in its financial horns for a while, as lead councillors, she and Cllr Duff had agreed upon plastic flowers for the event and had purchased these. Cllr Linton had suggested fresh flowers would be a better alternative. The committee AGREED the plastic flowers should be used this year and seen in situ before any decision was made for future events.

Cllr Chapman said she would be issuing the Funday Sunday tasklist soon, and asked all attending councillors and officers to check they were happy with and understood the tasks assigned to them.

### 233/26 **NEW ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING (8<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2026)**

Nothing was suggested.

*The Meeting closed at 20:07.*

Chairman: **Cllr Elizabeth Linton** Date: **8<sup>th</sup> June 2026**

(END)