



EAST PRESTON PARISH COUNCIL

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MINUTES: of the Proceedings of the Monthly Meeting of East Preston Parish Council held at 19:00 on Monday, 1st June 2026 at East Preston Infant School, Lashmar Road, East Preston

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

ALSO: Simon Cross, Clerk to the Council

Councillor Roger Elkins, West Sussex County Council (until 19:26)

Councillor Philippa Bowers, Arun District Council (until 19:26)

Six members of the public

ABSENT: Councillor Christine Bowman

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The following acronyms 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 19:02.

385/26 **INTRODUCTIONS**

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

386/26 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology and a reason for absence had been received from Cllr Bowman.

2114 The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to accept the apologies received from Cllr Bowman (away).

Apologies had also been received from District Cllrs R Bower and Kelly.

387/26 DECLARATION OF PERSONAL AND/OR PREJUDICIAL/PECUNIARY INTERESTS

No interests were declared.

388/26 PUBLIC SESSION

Agenda Item 11a – Amenities Committee – Mrs F reported a cricket ball had smashed the windscreen of a car in the Warren Recreation Ground car-park during the cricket match on Saturday, 30th May. Would the council now close the car-park during cricket matches. Mrs F said this was not the only ball to have been hit out of the ground during the match.

Cllr Toney confirmed this incident had been included in the cricket club's report to the council. Cllr Gunston said he had attended the first half of the match, to observe, and two balls had left the ground whilst he was there.

Mr J added the introduction of the dot-ball local rule was supposed to reduce significantly the number of balls leaving the ground but, following the first two matches of the current season, there had been no reduction at all.

389/26 COUNCIL RESPONSES

Cllr Toney thanked the public for their comments.

390/26 MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING HELD ON 11TH MAY 2026

The draft Minutes were circulated to all councillors on 13th May asking for suggested amendments by 20th May. None were received.

2115 The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously the Chairman could sign the Minutes as a true record of the meeting held on 11th May. Cllr Toney duly did so.

391/26 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 176/26 – East Preston Allotments**
- 3. Minute 242/26 – Warren Recreation Ground - cricket**
- 4. Minute 250/26 – West Sussex County Council**
- 5. Minute 306/26 – Annual appointment of the Chairman of the Council**

1. Introduction

This is the report covering items discussed during Full Council meetings up to and including the meeting held on 11th May 2026.

2. Minute 176/26 – East Preston Allotments

As mentioned last month, this matter is back with ADC. Some unexpected and mysterious clearance work was referred to Cllr Gunston who, in turn, asked our ADC officer contact whether

he could shed any light on this work. On 18th May, the ADC officer said he “was not aware of any work being done at the allotments, but I will try and find out if some was scheduled from out Maintenance team. In the meantime, I will endeavour to get back to you this week on the outstanding questions that you have raised.”

3. Minute 242/26 – Warren Recreation Ground - cricket

The first cricket match of the season took place on Saturday. 11th May. Cllr Wilkinson attended as the council’s observer.

The children’s playground was duly closed by the cricket club on behalf of the council. This had been publicised in an e-newsletter and is also publicised in the Spring 2026 paper Newsletter. At the time of writing, no concerns about this closure have been raised to the council.

Legal correspondence between the council and the cricket club and the Warren Recreation Ground continues.

4. Minute 250/26 – West Sussex County Council

The ironware has yet to be raised and road markings have yet to be replaced. I have chased both of these matters with WSCC Highways, no replies.

5. Minute 306/26 – Annual appointment of the Chairman of the Council

News from neighbouring parishes, so far:

Angmering PC: “Cllr. Nikki Hamilton-Street remains as Chair and Cllr. Alan Evans remains as Vice Chair.”

Rustington PC: “No changes here. Cllr Andy Cooper remains as Chairman, and Cllr Gary Lee remains as Vice-Chairman.”

Ferring PC: “No changes at Ferring - Chairman, Councillor Clare Royal and Vice Charman Councillor Ruth Arnold.”

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

20th May 2026

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

392/26 WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

County Cllr Elkins reported the new term had started at WSCC and, following the annual meeting held on 22nd May, a coalition was in place between the Liberal Democrats, Labour, Greens and one Local Alliance councillor. The coalition was currently agreeing its priorities.

As members would know, central government had opened a further consultation on local government reorganisation, this for a proposal which would see Arun and Adur District and Worthing Borough Councils form a single unitary authority, somewhat under the population threshold the government had initially set. No financial information had been published with the consultation which was open until 15th June, so there were concerns about the financial viability of the proposal. Cllr Elkins said he was concerned about the proposed authority’s ability to meet any housing targets as neither Worthing nor Adur had much scope for additional development, which may result in increased pressure upon the current Arun district to meet housing targets.

Cllr Elkins mentioned two safety campaigns currently underway at WSCC, one on staying safe around water and one on what to do if you came across an accident involving a motorcycle.

Mr S asked whether any petition had been started objecting to the proposed local government reorganisation. Cllr Elkins was not aware of such.

Cllr Linton said this council had duly taken part in previous consultations on local government reorganisation in which it had favoured the idea of a coastal strip unitary authority which would have included Chichester district too. Was that proposal now completely off the table? Cllr Elkins said he thought not, the government was simply seeking comments on an additional proposal.

Cllr Hill questioned how anyone could comment upon the proposal when there were no financial details available. Cllr Mathias suggested this council should contact its MP, Dr Beccy Cooper, for her input. Cllr Linton replied the council had most recently met with Dr Cooper in April at which point she too had been very keen for a coastal strip unitary authority.

Cllr Toney and the Clerk both raised the matter of the microsurfacing of North Lane and Sea Road which had taken place in April but for which no road markings had yet been reinstated, at least one gulley was still to be uncovered and all ironwork was yet to be lifted, despite the fact the Clerk had been told that lifting would take place within the two weeks after the microsurfacing was completed. The yet-to-be-uncovered gulley had caused flooding at the junction of Lashmar Road and North Lane; the un-lifted bits of ironwork were a hazard, particularly to cyclists; and the lack of road markings had meant, amongst other things, buses could not always get to the Village Green because cars were parked on both sides of Sea Road so buses had had to turn around in the junction with Normandy Drive, which was dangerous and which left some passengers stranded at the Village Green. Cllr Elkins said he was aware of all this and would contact to the WSCC Cabinet Member of Highways and Transport.

393/26 ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

District Cllr P Bower agreed there were concerns about housing and the financial viability of a unitary authority. Furthermore, neither Worthing Borough nor Adur District Council had much experience of town and parish councils and that may result in town and parish councils receiving reduced attention from a unitary authority where many officers may be unfamiliar with the good work undertaken by town and parish councils.

The district council had not held many meetings recently. The new chairman was the Labour councillor, Jill Long. Cllr Bower herself remained on the Audit & Governance and Environment committees. The Audit & Governance Committee had recently been pulled up for a lack of policy guidance and decisions. Cllr Bower said this was unsurprising under a coalition as a coalition would not want to upset anyone. Cllr Bower felt the opposition was currently being ignored.

(At the conclusion of this item, Cllrs Bower and Elkins and Mr S left the meeting.)

394/26 ANNUAL ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2026

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

Annual Financial Matters – Accounts for year-ending 31st March 2026

Council is asked to approve the accounts for the year-ending 31st March 2026 and can be signed by the Chairman and the Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer.

Cllr McElroy to introduce this item.

The accounts have been checked to the satisfaction of our Internal Auditor and can be found at Appendix A of these papers. This year, the Finance & General Purposes Committee has not met to review the figures.

Councillors with any questions are invited to call the office prior to the meeting. Adrian will be in the office on the morning of the meeting.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

26th May 2026

The accounts had been circulated as an appendix within the Supporting Papers for the meeting.

The accounts had been checked to the satisfaction of the council's Internal Auditor and were circulated with the supporting papers for the meeting.

2116 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously the Chairman of the Council and the Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer could sign the accounts for the year ending 31st March 2026.

The Chairman and the Clerk duly signed the Annual Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2026.

The following report, covering the next three Minutes, had been circulated in advance of the meeting:

Annual Financial Matters – Annual Governance and Accountability Return for year-ending 31st March 2026

Council is asked to note the Annual Internal Audit Report 2025/26 page of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year-ending 31st March 2026.

Council is asked to agree Section 1 – Annual governance statement 2025/26 - of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year-ending 31st March 2026 can be signed by the Chairman and the Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer.

Council is asked to agree Section 2 – Accounting statements 2025/26 - of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year-ending 31st March 2026 can be signed by the Chairman and the Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer.

Cllr McElroy to introduce this item.

At the end of each financial year, it is necessary for this council to complete an Annual Governance and Accountability Return which is then sent for external audit.

Appendix B shows the section of the form completed by the council's internal auditor, Andy Beams of Mulberry Local Authority Services Limited. Andy's full report is covered by Agenda Item 12a below.

Appendix C shows the two sections of the form the council needs to agree can be signed by the Chairman and me. Appendix B also includes the Internal Auditor's completed page of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return. I have circulated the complete Internal Auditor report to all councillors to give them additional confidence in agreeing to sign-off this paperwork.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

26th May 2026

The appropriate sections of the AGAR had been circulated as an appendices within the Supporting Papers for the meeting.

395/26 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR) FOR YEAR-ENDING 31ST MARCH 2026 – ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2025/26

The Council **NOTED** the *Annual Internal Audit Report 2025/26* section of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year-ending 31st March 2026.

396/26 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR) FOR YEAR-ENDING 31ST MARCH 2026 – SECTION 1, ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2025/26

- 2117 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously the Chairman of the Council and the Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer could sign Section 1 – *Annual Governance statement 2025/26* of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ending 31st March 2026.

The Chairman and the Clerk duly signed Section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ending 31st March 2026.

397/26 **ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR) FOR YEAR-ENDING 31ST MARCH 2026 – SECTION 2, ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS 2025/26**

- 2118 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously the Chairman of the Council and the Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer could sign Section 2 – *Accounting statements 2025/26* of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ending 31st March 2026.

The Chairman and the Clerk duly signed Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ending 31st March 2026.

398/26 **FINANCIAL MATTERS**

The Accounts for May 2026 had been distributed to Members in advance of the meeting.

- 2119 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Outstanding Purchase Orders report for 2026/27, value £2,864.80 (exc. VAT).
- 2120 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Regular Monthly Payments reports for May 2026 totalling £1,382.09 (inc. VAT).
- 2121 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Supplier BACS Invoices Paid reports for May 2026 totalling £27,751.08 (inc. VAT).
- 2122 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the List of Sales Receipts & Bank Receipts by Bank report for financial year to date totalling £12,743.09 (inc. VAT) for March 2026 (Year to Date, £178,047.60).

The council NOTED the Bank Reconciliations to 13th May 2026.

The council NOTED the Budget Summary for 2026/27 to date including earmarked reserves.

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

399/26 **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, Finance & General Purposes and Planning & Licensing. Draft Minutes have been circulated to all councillors.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

23rd May 2026

Agenda Item 11a

Amenities Committee

Cllr McElroy is chairman of this committee.

The committee met on 18th May 2026. Cllr McElroy was elected chairman and Cllr Toney was re-elected vice-chairman.

Village Map display boards – The village’s two Millennium noticeboards are to be replaced with two new composite display boards. Mr Paul Amoo, then on behalf of The East Preston Film Society, kindly proposed the donation of the two Village Map noticeboards, to mark the one hundredth film showing. The new composite boards will display the *Historic East Preston* walking map, adapted to fit by Mandy Armstrong, ADC’s Graphic Designer. One will be located at the Village Green and the other at the Northern Shops. The approximate cost of this project is in the region of £4,000. As this amount exceeds the donation received, the committee will be approaching Full Council to fund in the region of £2,000 to complete this project. This amount will cover the cost of the artwork design, installation and disposal of the old boards.

Sea Road Toilets – In order to protect the Hoist Assisted Toilet’s (HAT) external wall, a corner impact barrier has been installed. Full Council may recall in February 2025, a vehicle collided into the HAT’s external wall causing extensive damage. The entire wall needed to be rebuilt. The same impact barrier has also been installed around the Warren Recreation Ground’s car-park’s lighting column and a further two at the council offices.

Village Green improvements – The committee’s working party met with the project’s Landscape Architect, to discuss his designs and his strategy for the south-western corner improvements. Following this, a second interim drawing was produced for the working party’s consideration. At its May meeting, the committee raised its concern regarding the cost and timing of this project, given the council has just purchased the property next to the office. The committee has therefore agreed to place the project on hold and to ringfence the project’s remaining budget. The committee will review the project at a later date.

Warren Recreation Ground tennis court – as mentioned last month, the committee did discuss idea for changes which could be made to the tennis court’s gate to prevent unauthorised access resulting in misuse of the court. Today, I met a fencing contractor at the court and we discussed options for increasing the height of the existing fencing.

The committee’s next meeting remains scheduled for 10th August 2026.

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

26th May 2026

Agenda Item 11b

Audit & Governance Committee

Cllr Mathias is incumbent chairman of this committee.

To date the composition of this committee for the current council year is: Cllrs Toney and Linton as Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council respectively, and Cllr Bowman as Chairman of the Planning & Licensing Committee and Cllr McElroy as Chairman of the Amenities and Finance & General Purposes Committees. The chairmanship of the Community Engagement, Major Events and Personnel Committees will be decided in the next couple of months. If each of those three committees elects a chairman not already name above, the committee will be a full-strength. Chances are that will not happen, so there may be space for Cllrs Mathias and Wilkinson, both of whom have put themselves forward for membership of this committee.

Agenda Item 11c

Community Engagement Committee

Cllr Linton is the incumbent chairman of this committee.

The committee did not meet in May.

Some updates:

Newsletter No. 78, Spring 2026 – this went to print on 5th May. Thanks to everyone who contributed to a slightly shorter newsletter than of late, six pages rather than eight.

Youth Provision – the project working alongside Angmering and Rustington Parish Councils to provide a website to let local young people and their adults know what is available in the area is moving ahead. An article on page 23 of *All About East Preston and Kingston* gives more information on this.

The committee's next meeting will be on 8th June.

Agenda Item 11d

Finance & General Purposes Committee

Cllr McElroy is the chairman of this committee.

The committee met on 13th May. Cllr McElroy was re-elected chairman and Cllr Gunston was re-elected vice-chairman.

The main business was consideration of applications for Grant Aid for the new council year. The committee agreed to award Grant Aid funding to the following organisations: 1st East Preston Scout Group; 4SIGHT Vision Support; Air Ambulance Charity Kent Surrey Sussex; Arun Counselling Centre; East Preston Cricket Club; East Preston in Bloom; East Preston Yarnbombers; Family Support Work; Friends of East Preston Junior School; Friends of Oak Grove College; Friends of St Mary's Church; Home-Start Arun, Worthing and Adur; and WADARS. The total awarded was £8,376, leaving £1,624 in the Section 137 Grant Aid budget line for 2026/27. The average award was just under £650 per organisation. The committee turned down two applications which were deemed not strong enough.

East Preston Festival Committee was awarded £2,140 from a separate Section 144 Grant Aid budget line.

Most organisations have already sent their thanks to council and councillors and these will be included in the supporting paper for the committee's next meeting.

The committee is continuing to look at the possibility of awarding three-year grants to the most regular recipients. This should reduce the administration for the council and the organisations.

The committee considered its next steps in the take-on of the East Preston Community Boardwalk. These considerations included representations made by a member of the public. The committee has written to the directors of Sea Road Beach Access Ltd. detailing what further it would like to see before any handover. A response to this has not yet been forthcoming due to the scheduled unavailability of some of those directions.

The committee also discussed its next steps in the renewal of the lease to the Bowls Club. This includes agreement to the club's suggestion of a further meeting.

The committee agreed the council should commission an assessment of the council's three buildings for insurance renewal valuation purposes. This has been scheduled for mid-June.

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

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

25th May 2026

Agenda Item 11e

Major Events Committee

Cllr Linton is incumbent chairman of the committee.

The committee did not meet in May. There are no updates to those given to the May council meeting.

The committee's next meeting is scheduled for 22nd June.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

25th May 2026

Agenda Item 11f

Personnel Committee

The committee did not meet in May.

In the middle of the month, Cllr Linton and I gave Simon his annual appraisal. Thanks to all councillors who contributed such positive feedback. Some interesting thoughts came out of this meeting and will be taken to the next Personnel Committee meeting, scheduled for 20th July.

Simon has noticed a discrepancy between the council's Standing Orders and the Terms of Reference for each committee. This will also be discussed further at the next committee meeting.

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

26th May 2026

Planning & Licensing Committee

The committee met on 13th May. Cllr Bowman was re-elected chairman and Cllr Bradshaw was re-elected vice-chairman.

The committee had a single planning application to consider at the meeting and agreed to raise objections to a proposed redevelopment in Warren Crescent.

The committee noted a letter from the ADC Group Head of Planning & Building Control explaining upcoming national changes to what applications can be decided by a planning officer and what will be referred to the ADC Planning Committee. The committee felt the changes would result in a reduced weight given to local comments.

Cllr Bowman subsequently met with Mrs Vos, chairman of East Preston & Kingston Preservation Society, to agree comments back to the independent examiner of the revised East Preston Neighbourhood Plan.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

26th May 2026

Community Engagement – Cllr Linton reminded councillors of the council's events in the forthcoming East Preston Festival which required councillors to attend where possible. These were *Come and Meet Your Local Councillors* on Saturday, 6th June and *Putter Madness* mini-golf on Tuesday, 9th June. Cllrs Bradshaw and McElroy advised they were both unable to attend *Come and Meet Your Local Councillors*. Cllr Chapman agreed she would bake cakes for this event.

Personnel – the Clerk reported Ocean Jackson had joined the council this week as a work experience student. Already she had spent some time with Cllr Gunston and Adrian learning about the council's finance and, as the work progressed, Ocean would spend time with the chairmen of some of the council's other committees. Ocean had accepted a task of writing an article for the Summer 2026 Newsletter on the surprising things she will learn whilst with the council.

Planning & Licensing – although unable to attend the committee's first meeting of the new council year, Cllr Bradshaw said he was flattered to have been re-elected Vice-Chairman.

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

398/26 AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – INTERNAL AUDIT FOR YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2026

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

Audit & Governance Committee – internal audit for the year ending 31st March 2026

Council is asked to note the Internal Audit report for the year ending 31st March 2026.

The council's internal audit for the past municipal year was completed by Andy Beams of Mulberry Local Authority Services on Monday, 18th May. Andy's report was provided to the council on 19th May and circulated electronically to all councillors on the same day.

Andy's report included the following three paragraphs as part of his Executive Summary:

"Our testing did not identify any procedural errors requiring reporting to the external auditor at this time, nor did we observe any material weaknesses in internal controls that would pose a risk

to public funds. In fact, the processes and procedures together with own built in compensating controls are robust, strictly followed and in many respects a model of good practice.

“We are pleased to report that overall, the systems and procedures currently in place are appropriate and effective. While this report may include recommendations for improvement, these should not be viewed as indicators of significant deficiencies. Rather, they are intended to support the continued development of what is, in our view, a well-managed and robust governance framework.”

The council’s officers thank the several councillors who have kindly taken the time to thank them for their efforts in keeping the council on track.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

26th May 2026

Cllr Mathias said the Audit & Governance Committee would consider this report further at its meeting scheduled for July and that, having read it all, he felt it all sounded good. Cllr Toney added he thought it was an excellent report.

399/26 AMENITIES COMMITTEE – HERITAGE MAPS

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

Amenities Committee – heritage maps

Council is asked to agree to expenditure of up to £2,000 for the installation of new heritage maps.

As Dawn has written at Agenda Item 11a above, Paul Amoo, representing East Preston Film Society, approached the council wanting to replace the millennium maps located by the Village Green car-park and at the Northern shops. The maps have been in place for over 25 years and need some refreshing. Paul suggested replacing the millennium maps with the Historic East Preston maps created under Cllr Gunston’s guidance in 2024.

The donation from the Film Club, in honour of its 100th film screening in the village does not cover the whole project. Dawn has estimated the installation costs and disposal costs of the existing noticeboards will be up to £2,000. This would be taken from the council’s general reserves.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

26th May 2026

Cllr McElroy explained the background to this request and confirmed the sum the East Preston Film Society had contributed to this project.

2123 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to expenditure of up to £2,000 for the installation of new heritage maps.

400/26 REPORTS FROM PARISH COUNCIL WORKING PARTIES

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

Working Parties

None of the council’s working parties met in May, except for the Leases Working Party at the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting already reported above.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

26th May 2026

Agenda Item 14a

20mph Working Party

Membership of this working party, as agreed at the last meeting, had reduced to just Cllr Toney. Unless more new members can be found for this working party, it will cease to exist, see Agenda Item 15a below. If any councillor would like to put themselves forward for the working party, please let me know.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

18th May 2026

Agenda Item 14b

Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation (Devo WP)

Cllr Gunston is chairman of this working party which is currently dormant.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

26th May 2026

Agenda Item 14c

Flat and Frontage Working Party (FFWP)

Cllr Wilkinson has stepped down as the chairman of this working party.

No updates from this working party explicitly.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

26th May 2026

Agenda Item 14d

Leases Working Party (LWP)

This working party is currently without a chairman.

As part of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 12th May, those members of the Leases Working Party present considered the latest correspondence from the bowls club's negotiator and agreed a response.

Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation – Cllr Gunston said he would draft a council reply to the public consultation mentioned above by County Cllr Elkins that he would circulate so councillors could also reply as individuals.

Leases – the Clerk added the council was prepared to meet with representatives of the bowls club and this was being discussed by the negotiators for both sides.

401/26 20MPH WORKING PARTY

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

20mph Working Party

Committee is asked to disband this working party.

The working party's Terms of Reference were adopted on 9th January 2023 with a main objective to act, "This working party acts as an advisor to East Preston Parish Council on matters relating to a proposal from the village Community Speed Watch team to implement some 20mph zones in the village."

That proposal has struggled to find traction at West Sussex County Council. The most recent village survey showed 64.55% support for a 20mph zone in the village; more members of the public have stopped me in the street to object to the proposal than to register their support.

As reported above, this working party is currently without a chairman and only has Cllr Toney as councillor member.

Council's Standing Orders state, "The minimum number of active councillors on a working party at any time to be three," (Standing Order 28d.) Standing Orders continue, "When there are fewer than three active councillors on a working party, that working party will have a month's grace to bring the number back up to three, If after that month there are not three active councillors, this working part will automatically be disbanded."

A month has not yet passed since the Annual Meeting of the Council but, at the time of writing, no other councillors have come forward to sit on this working party. If no councillors have come forward by the time of the meeting, the council could either defer a decision until a month has passed or could put the working party out of its misery now.

The Clerk asked whether any other councillors wished to join Cllr Toney in this working party. Nobody replied positively.

2124 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to disband the 20mph Working Party.

The council would publish an article in the Summer 2026 Newsletter to explain this decision.

402/26 118-120 SEA ROAD

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 118-120 Sea Road.

Nothing particularly to consider ahead of the meeting.

Cllr Gunston led a working party in the property on 18th May, supported by Cllrs Linton and Wilkinson. The council thanks Jane Souttar, Debbie Neiman, Christian Dennis and Wendy Walker for the great work they did in the garden in a very short space of time. By the time you read this report, John may well have set a further date for works.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

26th May 2026

The Clerk said he and Cllr Gunston had met on 29th May and discussed how to make some progress with the refurbishment of 118-120 Sea Road. As a result of that meeting, the Clerk proposed the following:

1. Upgrade the Flat & Frontage Working Party to a full committee with delegated rights to spend money;
2. If that was agreed in principle, hold an initial committee meeting on 15th June at 19:00;
3. Ratify this upgrade at the July Full Council meeting;
4. Finance & General Purposes Committee in August to look at the financial administration changes needed in support of this upgrade.

Cllrs Gunston and Bowman, having had a lot of involvement in the purchase of the building to have the ability to join the Flat & Frontage Committee if created.

The council's Financial Regulations allowed "a duly delegated committee of the council for all items of expenditure within their delegated budgets" (Section 5.15). Priority remained getting 120 into a suitable condition for renting out.

2125 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously, in principle, to upgrade the Flat & Frontage Working Party to be a committee with delegated spending rights. This decision to be ratified at the next council meeting.

Cllr Linton had negotiated with DART it would help remove the debris created by Cllr Gunston's working party in removing carpets and suchlike.

403/26 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The following report had been circulated ahead of the meeting:

Annual Parish Meeting, 11th May 2026

Council is asked to note the draft Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 11th May.

The Annual Parish Meeting took place on 11th May and included a presentation from Alice Jalley on behalf of Chestnut Tree House hospice. The meeting was followed by drinks and nibbles with some of the members of the public who had attended. These were circulated electronically to all councillors on 26th May.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

15th May 2026

Council NOTED the draft Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting without proposing any changes.

406/26 SUSSEX POLICE

No report had been received.

407/26 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. **Year-end internal audit for the year ending 31st March 2026, 18th May**
6. **Community Speedwatch (CSW), 21st May**
7. **Alison Griffiths MP Zachary Merton meeting, 21st May**
8. **Social media**
9. **MailChimp stats**
10. **A selection of things we have been asked since the last meeting**
11. **Recent bouquets and complaints**
12. **Leave**
13. **June meetings and events**

1. **Introduction**

This is the report mainly covering May 2026 and matters which may not arise elsewhere on the agenda.

2. **Police matters**

Some misuse of the Warren Recreation Ground tennis court by youths climbing over the fence to gain access. PCSO Raj has said he believes he knows the main perpetrators and their families.

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**

No new requests received in May.

5. **Year-end internal audit for the year ending 31st March 2026, 18th May**

Andy Beams visited the council for the morning of 18th May. His report was received on 19th May and immediately circulated electronically to all councillors.

Please see the supporting paper for Agenda Item 12a above for an insight into Andy's conclusions.

6. **Community Speedwatch (CSW), 21st May**

Chris Eschbaeher and I completed a Community Speedwatch shift in Worthing Road for an hour from 08:30. We were only monitoring eastbound traffic. We recorded 194 vehicles travelled that

route in that hour, three of which were travelling about the threshold. They have had their details forwarded to Sussex Police. No real abuse, just a few drivers driving past unnecessarily slowly. One member of the public talked positively about CSW and he might be persuaded to join the team.

7. **Alison Griffiths MP Zachary Merton meeting, 21st May**

Alison Griffiths is the MP for Bognor Regis and Littlehampton, which includes Rustington, home to the Zachary Merton hospital. In conjunction with Rustington Parish Council, Alison organised a public meeting with NHS representatives to discuss the current status of the hospital site and its possible futures. The meeting was only open to people living within the constituency, so I was able to attend. Rustington PC managed to get the chairmen of East Preston and Angmering Parish Councils in as observers, so Cllr Toney was also there.

The meeting was held at the Woodlands Centre, full to capacity. Initially, the meeting was addressed by Alison, Cllr Andy Cooper in his role as Chairman of Rustington Parish Council, Siobhan Melia, Chief Executive of Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust, and Amy Galea, Chief Commissioning Officer for Neighbourhoods and Partnerships at NHS Surrey and Sussex Integrated Care Board. Those were the platform speakers. The first member of the public to address the meeting was Cllr Alison Cooper, county councillor for Rustington and then a number of members of the public were able to ask questions of the panel. Mostly, the meeting was respectful. I believe the two NHS representatives did take on board the concerns of the public but, with the current focus very much on treating people at home (i.e. the concept of virtual wards), I think any campaign to reinstate a community facility in Rustington is going to face a steep uphill climb. (Just my opinion.)



If you look really closely, you can see me standing at the back of the hall. Cllr Toney is partially visible over the shoulder of my Rustington counterpart, Carole Ward (photograph courtesy of Cllr Andy Cooper)

8. **Social Media**

Only one of the council's Facebook posts reached more than 500 people in the past month:

- Post advising of WSCC Highways works in Sea Lane – 4,031 people

(posts up to and including 26th May)

The number of Followers is currently 2,027, an increase of 9 on the last report.

9. **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 – 8th May – sent to 963 subscribers, opened by 632 (65.6%)

Parish Council news – 14th May – sent to 962, opened by 643 (66.8%)

The MailChimp software is recording this information differently to previously and possibly incorrectly, but without a contract there is no way of contacting support to report this. There is no other obvious reason why our open stats should be nearly 10% down on where it was earlier this year.

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

Has anyone handed in my grandson's mobile phone?

No. But I gave advice and the council posted on its Facebook page.

Our neighbour has a dead fox in the garden. It's not in public property as long you understand it it's up to them to get rid of it. Unfortunately, that's very difficult because of their circumstances. Is there anyone that might be able to help?

I confirmed a private pest controller would be best placed to collect and advise.

We would like to complain about one of the advertisers in your magazine, All About East Preston and Kingston.

Not our magazine, I advised the authors to direct their complaint to the publisher.

Is anyone able to come and tweak the poo bag dispenser at the cricket field as there are bad in there but can't get them out? Rarely use this facility unless absolutely necessary and today was that day 🙋. It's a brilliant facility when working for those that forget a poo bag.

Yes, Caspar can look at that, and did.

11. **Recent bouquets and complaints**

(In addition to anything reported above)

From the lady whose grandson had mislaid his phone, "I know you saw Paul yesterday and heard that someone found Archie's mobile phone, but we just wanted to thank you for your support and advice. It was great that you kindly put a message out on Facebook- I continued to reassure Archie that there are good people around. We were so happy and grateful that it was found. Good luck to all of your future plans for the office move."

From the lady with the dead fox in her garden, "Thank you very much - extremely helpful. I shall get in touch with someone today."

"Thanks for your advice," from the couple who wanted to complain about the advert in All About East Preston and Kingston.

From a local Neighbourhood Watch coordinator, "Reading the latest EPPC Newsletter, I was impressed that you will be offering up to two speed restriction stickers to EP residents for wheelie bins, sometime soon. Good news!"

12. **Leave**

Dawn will be on leave on 1st June. I will be on leave for most of 2nd June. Adrian is off for the weeks beginning 8th and 15th June. Alison is off on the 8th and the 15th.

13. **June Meetings and Events**

This list may be incomplete and is subject to change. Where committee meetings fall on the same day, the timings of these meetings may also be subject to change.

- 1st Full Council (19:00, East Preston Infant School)
- 3rd ADC Fraud Awareness presentation (18:00, online) (DM only)
- 5th East Preston Festival starts (until 14th)
- 6th East Preston Festival: *Come and Meet Your Local Councillors* ((councillors) 09:30 to 12:30, Council Office)
- 8th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00, Council Office)
Community Engagement Committee (19:00, Council Office)
- 9th East Preston Festival: *Putter Madness* ((councillors) 15:45 to 19:15, Village Green)
- 20th East Preston Repair Café (10:00, East Preston Infant School)
- 22nd Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00, Council Office)
Major Events Committee (19:00, Council Office)
- 29th Chairmanship training (18:30, East Preston Infant School)

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

26th May 2026

Item 2 – Police matters – Cllr Linton asked whether PCSO Raj had provided any further information on crime statistics to that already published in the Minutes of the last meeting. The Clerk replied he had not.

Cllr Linton asked how PCSO Raj was using his knowledge of the youths who he believes have been misusing the Warren Recreation Ground tennis court. The Clerk thought PCSO Raj was using that knowledge as a threat to the youths who may well have been amongst those who caused a lot of problems in Rustington last summer.

Mr F queried the configuration of the existing tennis court fencing. The Clerk replied the Assistant Clerk, Dawn, had discussing options with a fencing contractor for how to make the tennis court less easy to climb into.

408/26 EXTERNAL MEETINGS AND EVENTS

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

ADC Town and Parish Climate Change Group, 20th May

online

An online session introduced the idea of habitat banking to 14 Town and Parish Councils. Arun are doing a feasibility study on land they own to see if they can set up a habitat bank to allow developers to fund projects and meet their statutory obligation to leave nature 10% better off after building work.

We were also given an update on a number of other projects including the installation of solar panels at the Wave Centre using Energise South Downs, Arundel's Great Big Green Week from 6th - 14th June and Eco Churches.

Cllr John Gunston

20th May 2026

Cllr Gunston drew council's attention to ADC's use of a company called Energise South Downs for providing solar panels at Littlehampton Wave Leisure Centre. This could be worth remembering should the council pursue solar panels for the office buildings or at the Village Hall, for example.

409/26 RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Nothing was added.

410/26 NEW ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING (6TH JULY 2026)

Nothing was suggested.

The meeting ended at 19:47.

Chairman: **Cllr Steve Toney** Date: **6th July 2026**

END