

**MONTHLY MEETING  
OF THE COUNCIL**

**8<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2018**

**SUPPORTING PAPERS**

## **Agenda Item 8**

### **Minutes of Monthly Full Council meeting, 4<sup>th</sup> December**

The draft Minutes were circulated to all councillors on 5<sup>th</sup> December, asking for comments by 12<sup>th</sup> December. No suggested changes were received.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

20<sup>th</sup> December 2017

## **Agenda Item 9**

### **Monthly Update Report**

1. **Introduction**
2. **Minute 632/17 – Community Engagement Committee - defibrillator**
3. **Minute 897/17 – Public Session – youth shelter**
4. **Minute 897/17 – Public Session – fig tree**
5. **Minute 898/17 – Councillor Responses to Public Session – youth shelter**
6. **Minute 903/17 – Arun District Council – future liaison with Town and Parish Councils**
7. **Minute 904/17 – Arun District Council – revised Members’ Code of Conduct**
8. **Minute 911/17.8 – Clerk’s Report – East Preston Christmas Celebrations, 25<sup>th</sup> November**
9. **Minute 913/17 – Response to External Meetings and Events**

1. **Introduction**

This is the report covering items discussed during Full Council meetings up to and including the meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2017.

2. **Minute 632/17 – Community Engagement Committee - defibrillator**

The defibrillator has been ordered and received and should hopefully be installed on the outside wall of the Council Office by the end of January.

3. **Minute 897/17 – Public Session – youth shelter**

On behalf of the council, I gave Andy Parsons of the football club the written assurance the club sought that no final decision would be made about the future of the Youth Shelter until after the Amenities Committee meeting scheduled for 15<sup>th</sup> January.

4. **Minute 897/17 – Public Session – fig tree**

The report, produced on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2017 by The Urban Surgeons, has been sent to Mrs Akhurst and stated as follows: “There are multiple lesions and included bark within the main stem which could ultimately compromise the stability of the tree. Furthermore, the heartwood is clearly compromised and there are visible signs of decay. Although it is difficult to ascertain the extent of the internal deterioration, this can be deemed a concern due to the angle at which the tree has grown. Overall I would suggest the tree would be susceptible to potential branch failure in the short to medium term. I would also advise to continue monitoring the stem for signs of further deterioration.”

Mrs Akhurst had previously been sent the Annual Tree Inspection report for 2017, produced by ArbTec Tree Care, wherein it said of the fig tree: “Due to this tree’s close proximity to the toilet block and the wall and with the impending alteration works that are planned it is recommended that this tree be felled to ground level.” The owner of ArbTec Tree Care has a Certificate in Arboriculture from the Royal Forestry Society.

As an aside, I have not received the questions Mrs Akhurst said she would send me.

5. **Minute 898/17 – Councillor Responses to Public Session – youth shelter**

I have persuaded Arun District Council to litter-pick at Lashmar Recreation Ground three times a week for the foreseeable future as opposed to the twice a week it was visiting. Litter-pickers will monitor the need.

Coincidentally, on 18<sup>th</sup> December, Elle Ford at ADC contacted all town and parish councils in the district asking for help in building “up a more comprehensive picture within Arun of what [drug litter] and where we are finding it.” Elle has asked us to complete a quarterly spreadsheet.

6. **Minute 903/17 – Arun District Council – future liaison with Town and Parish Councils**

I submitted this council’s response to this consultation on 19<sup>th</sup> December, having first given the Chairman the chance to comment upon my completion of the consultation document. If any member wishes to see the completed document, they just need to ask and I will forward them the document. I have already shared the document with the secretary of the Arun District Association of Local Councils.

7. **Minute 904/17 – Arun District Council – revised Members’ Code of Conduct**

Following the decision taken to adopt the revised Members’ Code of Conduct, I have tailored the Code and circulated it to councillors for them to sign a new Members’ Declaration and complete the revised Register of Interests form. At the time of writing, more councillors have completed these forms than have not.

8. **Minute 911/17.8 – Clerk’s Report – East Preston Christmas Celebrations, 25<sup>th</sup> November**

I have met again with the resident of Sea Road who complained about a hot food stall being located outside her bedroom. I said this concern had been noted by the Community Engagement Committee at its meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> November. She was very appreciative to hear this and that I sought her out to let her know. Having said that the resident has said she will probably make sure she goes out of the village on this year’s Christmas Celebrations day.

## 9. Minute 913/17 – Response to External Meetings and Events

I have not ascertained what neighbouring parish councils have in place with regards to an Emergency Plan.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

2<sup>nd</sup> January 2018

## Agenda Items 11a and 11b

### Finance & General Purposes Committee – budget and precept for 2018/19

Cllr Shah to introduce this item.

**Council is asked to consider the following two recommendations from the Finance & General Purposes Committee:**

**To set a budget of £266,237.58 for the financial year 2018/19**

**and**

**To set a precept of £242,829.95 for the financial year 2018/19**

At its meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> December, the Finance & General Purposes Committee reviewed its own budgets and those of the other budget-holding committees: Amenities, Audit & Governance and Community Engagement. This will be the first year the Audit & Governance Committee has had its own budget and this was set by Finance & General Purposes as its meeting fell before that of the Audit & Governance Committee.

The committee agreed unanimously to recommend to Full Council a budget of £266,237.58 for the coming financial year. This is an increase of 0.5% on the current year's budget.

Headlines changes from last year are as follows:

Admin budget - £2,800 interest expected from having split up the council's reserves into better-serving accounts;

Amenities budget – extra £1,300 set aside for improvements to the Village Green;

Audit & Governance budget – initial £1,250 budget;

Community Engagement budget – additional £1,400 income expected from Food & Drink Festival and Christmas Celebrations event; £4,000 budgeted for provision of a replacement website; additional £1,500 towards additional and replacement Christmas lighting; possible provision of a second school crossing patroller.

Items previously in the Community Engagement budget but no longer: Community Warden, contribution to ADC environmental warden, purchase of additional sound kit.

Finance & General Purposes budget – additional £10,000 to enable the East Preston Youth Club to run twice-weekly from 1<sup>st</sup> April; £1,000 reduction in the Grant Aid budget as the number of applications was significantly down this year.

The committee also agreed unanimously to recommend to Full Council a precept of £242,829.95. This has been calculated as a 3% increase on the current precept for a Band D property. The council's Tax Base has increased very slightly from 2,752 to 2,761 – this is the total number of taxable properties in the village expressed as the number of Band D properties in the village.

This is still a deficit budget, but the precept increase reduces the amount of reserves needed to support this budget compared to increasing the precept in line with the budget.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

2<sup>nd</sup> January 2018

## **Agenda Item 12**

### **Committees**

Since the last meeting, the following committee meetings have taken place: Audit & Governance and Finance & General Purposes, both on 11<sup>th</sup> December; and Planning & Licensing Committee on 11<sup>th</sup> December.

Draft Minutes from some of these meetings have already been circulated to all councillors.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

29<sup>th</sup> December 2017

## **Agenda Items 13a and 13b**

### **Audit & Governance Committee – internal auditor**

Cllr Mathias to introduce this item.

The council contracted R.S. Hall & Co. to act as its Internal Auditor for the three financial years ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016. Subsequently, the council has extended that contract to include the financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018.

The Audit & Governance Committee is recommending to council that it waives Standing Orders 29b and 29c which detail how a formal tender exercise should be carried out, so that the current contract can be further extended by a single year.

The Audit & Governance Committee would likely carry out a formal tender exercise for the Internal Auditor later this year in time for a new contract to be awarded from the 2019/20 financial year.

A similar proposal arose in November 2010, at which point I contacted the Sussex Associations of Local Councils and received the following advice:

“The council will need to vote to suspend the Standing Order on this occasion. As long as the council put it on the agenda, Vote and agree to suspend the standing order, vote and agree to extend the contract for 1 year you will have acted lawfully and legally.”

**Council is asked to suspend Standing Order 29 so the internal auditor’s contract can be extended by one year up to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019.**

**Council is asked to agree to a one-year extension to the Internal Auditor’s contract at an estimated cost of £550 excluding VAT.**

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

29<sup>th</sup> December 2017

## **Agenda Items 14a-d**

### **Working Parties**

None of the council’s Working Parties has met independently since the last Full Council meeting. However, the Leases Working Party met as part of the Audit & Governance Committee meeting to work on the renewal of the Angmering-on-Sea Lawn Tennis Club’s lease.

The Website Working Party meeting scheduled for 20<sup>th</sup> December was postponed due to lack of availability. I have drafted Terms of Reference for the working party and have asked the members of the working party to comment. No comments received at the time of writing.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

2<sup>nd</sup> January 2018

## **Agenda Item 15**

### **Clerk’s Report**

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Police matters**
- 3. Freedom of Information / Data Protection requests**
- 4. Postbox outside the Council Office, 10<sup>th</sup> November**
- 5. East Preston Cricket Club meeting, 30<sup>th</sup> November**
- 6. East Preston Village Pre-school meeting, 5<sup>th</sup> December**
- 7. East Preston Business Community Business Breakfast, 7<sup>th</sup> December**
- 8. Society of Local Council Clerks Sussex Branch, 8<sup>th</sup> December**
- 9. *It’s A Nativity*, East Preston Infant School, 13<sup>th</sup> December**
- 10. Social Media**

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

1. **Introduction**

This is the report mainly covering December 2017, and covers matters that may not arise elsewhere on the agenda.

2. **Police matters**

No new police matters during December.

3. **Freedom of Information / Data Protection requests**

No requests received or made.

4. **Postbox outside the Council Office, 10<sup>th</sup> November**

During the morning of the 10<sup>th</sup> November, the cast-iron postbox from outside the Council Office was removed and replaced with a brand-new stainless steel one. The new postbox is the traditional design. It has no furniture on it yet, so we have been fielding questions as to whether or not it is operational – it is. At the time of writing there is still no signage on the box and the temporary sign we put on it has been removed.

5. **East Preston Cricket Club meeting, 30<sup>th</sup> November**

Cllr Duijf and I attended the twice-yearly meeting with representatives of the Cricket Club. Cllrs Mathias and Shah had given their apologies. The Club was represented by Keith Chamberlain (Chairman) and Colin Smith (Secretary); Andy Reeves (Treasurer) had given his apologies.

The Club reported it had had a good season with the First XI being promoted. From the beginning of next season, the whole of Sussex will play in the many divisions of the Sussex Cricket League.

The Club was waiting for the annual inspection of the netting to be carried out before it could say what remedial work was necessary. The Club was beginning to think the current netting was perhaps getting to the end of its life.

6. **East Preston Village Pre-school meeting, 5<sup>th</sup> December**

I met with representatives of the East Preston Village Pre-school and East Preston Cricket Club to hear the Pre-school's thoughts about setting up a proper outdoor space adjacent to the cricket pavilion. I have invited the Pre-school reps to attend the Amenities Committee meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> January to discuss their thoughts with the council. The Chairman of the Cricket Club has provided written confirmation the club has no problems with the Pre-school's thinking.

#### **7. East Preston Business Community Business Breakfast, 7<sup>th</sup> December**

This month's Business Breakfast was held at Mrs Beeton's and Cllr Tester attended with me. Several businesses were represented. David Macdonald from the Martlet Partnership provided some taxation and financial updates. There was also a short discussion about charging for use of the Village Green car-park, partly prompted by one business starting a petition for other businesses to sign.

There will be no Business Breakfast in January.

#### **8. Society of Local Council Clerks Sussex Branch, 8<sup>th</sup> December**

This quarterly meeting was held at Lewes Town Hall. This was a day of major disruption on the local rail network following a power cut near East Croydon so several of us missed the scheduled start time. As that included the meeting chairman, we did not miss any of the meeting itself. Felpham was the only other Arun council represented.

The meeting abandoned the formal agenda format instead being a more open Q&A session during which Clerks present could ask questions of an expert panel formed of the Clerks of HAYways Heath and Lewes Town Councils – Steve Trice and Steve Brigden respectively – and Trevor Leggo, Chief Executive of the Sussex and Surrey Associations of Local Councils (SSALC). The only question particularly of interest to this council was whether or not individual councillors will be needed to register individually with the Information Commission's Office after the General Data Protection Regulations come into force in May of this year. Mr Leggo said he saw no reason why they should want to as long as the council was already registered.

#### **9. It's A Nativity, East Preston Infant School, 13<sup>th</sup> December**

All councillors were invited to attend a performance of either of the Infant School's productions this year but as most could not attend, I attended the first performance of the YR and Y1 production of *It's A Nativity*. Over 100 children aged between 4 and 6 took part in this charming production. Not surprisingly, most had never been on stage before but they almost all stepped up to the challenge without much hesitation. Cllr Duff attended the Y2 production at the same school.

#### **10. Social media**

This is the last month in which I should include this information in this format. I only started this item to give councillors some idea of what we post and how far-reaching some posts are. You have a good idea of that now.

That said, only these Facebook posts published since the last supporting papers reached more than 500 people:

- ▲ Post of article about the former landlord of The Tudor Tavern, Chris Hughes, being put away for 18 months for VAT fraud – 5,465 people
- Poster advertising Bognor Regis Model Railway Club's January exhibition – 700
- Vacancy for school crossing patrollers – 628
- Details of Christmas and New Year refuse collections – 601

† Food & Drink Festival page



▲ East Preston Business Community page

\* East Preston Christmas Celebrations page

(posts up until 31<sup>st</sup> December)

The number of people currently following the council on Facebook is 1,071.

No posts placed on Nextdoor.

### 11. **MailChimp stats**

Since the last papers were issued, the council has sent out the following emails to local residents on the council's e-mailing list:

Parish Council news – 30<sup>th</sup> November – sent to 729 recipients, opened by 457 to date (62.8%)

Parish Council news – 21<sup>st</sup> December – sent to 732, opened by 454 to date (62.3%)

### 12. **Things we have been asked since the last meeting**

“Do you know the direct number for Curry's in Littlehampton?” (No.)

“Do you know where I can buy some more of the church's Christmas cards.” (We know a man who does.)

“Can I park on the office forecourt on New Year's Eve evening?” (Outside office hours, the forecourt is for the use of the tenant in the flat above.)

“Pls could you refer me to the community blog. I was a member but have not received any updates lately.” (Between us, we decided this was referring to Nextdoor.)

### 13. **Recent bouquets and complaints**

(In addition to anything above)

From a resident who had emailed initially about charging for the Village Green car-park and then sent a second email as follows: “I should also have mentioned in my previous email that I loved the Poppies on the lamp posts. A fabulous idea. Also the Christmas decorations this year are exceptionally good. And finally, I thought the Christmas food fayre was much better this year and I saw many people enjoying the sunshine and the stalls. Thank you East Preston Parish Council. You work very hard.”

Following my response to her about charging for the Village Green car-park, the same resident wrote, “Thank you very much for responding to my email and taking a long time to reply so fully. I certainly appreciate that you have taken the time to write to me and explain the situation with the car park. I now see that you are stuck between a rock and a hard place. I very much appreciate the information you have supplied and thank you for the work you and the other Councillors put in to keeping East Preston a lovely village, although I don't agree with your ideas sometimes!”

From a resident of Sea Road who had written in about the Village Green car-park: “I know you are doing your best and get caught between the devil and the deep blue sea, it's impossible to please everybody”.

From the resident leading the campaign to have no 32 North Lane cleared up a bit, “There has been a fair bit of clearing from no.32 that is true, so I would say for the time being [Arun District] Council has taken sufficient action [...] Hopefully it has made a difference, there

have been mutterings of approval from the East Preston silent. [...] None of it would have been possible without your help which you know I am very thankful for. I'm sure like myself you will take a continued interest, and let's hope things continue on the same path as the last few months!"

From a resident of Sea Lane Close, "Just wanted to say thank you to the EP PC team for all the hard work and help again this year. We celebrated our two year anniversary in EP on 11 December and are so very glad we moved here, we hope it will be our forever home."

#### 14. **Leave**

I will be on leave on 18<sup>th</sup> January.

#### 15. **January Meetings and Events**

This list may be incomplete and is subject to change.

8 <sup>th</sup>	Full Council (19:00, East Preston Infant School)
15 <sup>th</sup>	Personnel Committee (details tbc)
	Amenities Committee (19:00, East Preston Infant School)
22 <sup>nd</sup>	Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00, East Preston Infant School)
24 <sup>th</sup>	East Preston Christmas Celebrations Working Party (19:00, Council Office)

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**

2<sup>nd</sup> January 2018