



EAST PRESTON PARISH COUNCIL

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MINUTES: of the Proceedings of the Monthly Meeting of East Preston Parish Council held on Monday, 8th January 2018 at the East Preston Infant School, Lashmar Road, East Preston

PRESENT: Councillors Christine Barber, Lisa Duff, Joop Duijf (Chairman), Barbara Gale, Pat Gander, Elizabeth Linton, Glyn Mathias, Rick McElroy, Danny Shah, Hazel Tester, Steve Toney and Steve Wilkinson

ALSO: Clerk to the Council, Simon Cross

Two members of the public

ABSENT: Councillor David Moore

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Cllr Duijf opened the meeting at 19:02.

001/18 INTRODUCTIONS

Cllr Duijf welcomed those present, wished everyone a Happy New Year and reminded them of some items of meeting protocol.

002/18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology and a reason for absence were accepted from Cllr Moore (unavailable).

Apologies had also been received from District Cllrs Ricky Bower, Terry Chapman and Mike Clayden, County Cllr Roger Elkins, Mrs Celeste Amoo and Mrs Dorothy Lee.

003/18 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No interests were declared.

004/18 PUBLIC SESSION

(Items below marked **No Agenda Item** are raised at the discretion of the Chairman.)

Agenda Item 13a – Amenities Committee – Mrs Akhurst said the council needed to learn how to consult properly with the public. Her comments were prompted by the publication of an article in the Littlehampton Gazette of 4th January in which one business-owner complained about the negative impact of the introduction of charges for the use of the Village Green car-park. Mrs Akhurst had spoken to local businesses who said they had not been consulted. Just discussing matters at council

meetings did not constitute proper public consultation as defined in the dictionary. Mrs Akhurst reminded the council of the rift there had been in the village over the proposed Village Hall extension in 2010 because the council had not, in her opinion, consulted properly with the public. For a time the village had been deeply divided and Mrs Akhurst did not want to see this happen again. Could the council assure her full public consultation would be engaged in henceforward. Mrs Akhurst felt all current councillors should be advised of what had happened in 2010 so they could avoid a repeat. Public meetings should be held, to which the public could be invited and at which the public could give their opinions before the council made a decision. Mrs Akhurst said the charges at the car-park would have a knock-on effect by her own property and it had long been difficult enough to exit her driveway safely anyway.

Mr Beale said local businesses had been consulted.

005/18 COUNCILLOR RESPONSES

Cllr McElroy responded, stating the council had published an article in the Winter 2017 newsletter advising residents of its proposal to start charging for use of the Village Green car-park. Very little feedback had been received and the matter had continued to be discussed both at Amenities Committee meetings and Full Council meetings, all of which would have had members of the public present, maybe not in great numbers but present nonetheless. Sometimes, members of the public will only engage with the council once they have been personally affected by something. He had not been in the village in 2010 and had chosen not to learn what had happened although learning some of the story had been unavoidable.

The Chairman reminded the meeting the council had a mandate to make certain decisions on behalf of the village without the need for public consultation on every one of those decisions. He, personally, had also chosen not to find out what had happened in 2010 as it was before his time; he regretted that a few people in the village still raised it in their dealings with the council.

With reference to the proposed Village Hall extension project, the Clerk reminded Mrs Akhurst the council had published articles in ten consecutive quarterly newsletters between 2008 and 2010. His own opinion regarding letting all current councillors know what had happened in 2010 was let sleeping dogs lie but if there were current councillors who wanted to know, if they asked he would tell them.

Cllr Shah supported his colleagues' comments saying the right steps had been taken in consulting with the public over the introduction of charging for the Village Green car-park.

006/18 WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL (WSCC)

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

West Sussex County Council

Apologies for Monday evening as I am unable to attend; I highlight a few key points for the meeting.

With the schools now returning I will be looking at the parking issues raised and follow up on the travel plan in order to get officers views on the issue and would hope to be able to update you as soon as possible.

Regarding the MUGA at East Preston Junior School and note the correspondence and I am happy to be copied in on your communications.

I look forward to any observations you have on setting up an Emergency Planning Group and for any joint training day with assistance from the WSCC team.

The County Council is in the final stages of its Budget for 18/19 now having received details on the Government Settlement and I will be attending as Vice Chairman of the Performance and Finance Select Committee on the 18th Jan when the details will be discussed prior to Full Council.

Items For General WSCC information.

SCHOOLS ADMISSION

Please note there is still a few more days for residents to have their say on the schools admissions process.

West Sussex County Council is asking for comments on:

- admission numbers for all schools
- key dates in the admissions process
- the proposed oversubscription criteria for all community and voluntary controlled schools, including a change to the Horsham town area for secondary transfer and to the catchment area of Midhurst/Easebourne areas.

The proposed admission arrangements would come in effect for Sept. 2019 admissions.

The consultation will run until Monday 15 January 2018. People can take part in the consultation at <https://haveyoursay.westsussex.gov.uk/children-adults-families-health-and-education/school-admission-arrangements-2019-2020>

For a printed copy of the consultation and response form please email admissions.south@westsussex.gov.uk or call 03330 142903.

Local voluntary aided, foundation schools and academies will consult people separately if they are proposing any changes to their admission arrangements

WORTHING TOWN CENTRE IMPROVEMENTS

A grand vision to create a 'continental-style' boulevard while improving access for all to Worthing town centre has been unveiled by West Sussex County Council.

The proposals, which also include pedestrianising some areas, focus on key routes and connections from the railway station to the seafront, such as the station approach, Portland Road and South Street.

The plans form part of a 'Growth Deal' agreed by West Sussex County Council and Worthing Borough Council earlier this year.

The deal sets out a joint pledge to work in partnership on a number of key projects to deliver regeneration and growth in the area during the next five years.

The improvements will help to connect and enhance six key redevelopment sites in the town (Teville Gate Site, Union Place Site, Grafton Site, Stagecoach Site, Aquarena Site, and the Civic Site) through a series of 'public realm' improvements.

It will also see both councils work with developers and residents to ensure that planned investments to help deliver new residential, commercial, leisure and retail spaces will result in a better town centre for all.

Details of the plans can be found on the County's website at www.westsussex.gov.uk by searching for 'growth deals'.

The plans will be on display at Worthing Library between Tuesday 2 January and Friday 12 January.

Both councils will work together on preferred options with a view to undertaking a detailed public consultation in the spring.

ASSITANCE TO DE ICE PATHS

For information and to help vulnerable residents a partnership has provided 175 boxes of de-icing salt for paths and driveways to help vulnerable and isolated residents just before Christmas.

The county council and Balfour Beatty Living Places worked together to provide the emergency salt supplies so community groups can help residents in extreme cold weather.

Community organisations in Adur, Arun and Chichester have received the salt, which is for de-icing home driveways and paths (and not suitable for public footpaths). The boxes are then distributed through local networks to support vulnerable residents.

TRADING STANDARDS

Trading Standards officers hope the case of a Worthing shop losing its premises alcohol licence will deter others from stocking illicit tobacco and selling to under-age customers.

Worthing News in Rowlands Road had its licence revoked by Worthing Borough Council's licensing committee last week.

The committee heard that tobacco products found at the shop presented a safety risk and that an under-age volunteer posing as a customer was sold electronic cigarette liquid.

Trading Standards officers, with a sniffer dog, found tobacco products which were not properly labelled behind the shop counter on 31 July. A total of 780 cigarettes and 200g of rolling tobacco were seized. West Sussex Trading Standard's application for the licence to be revoked was supported by the County Council's Public Health team and Sussex Police.

Trading Standard's Team Manager Richard Sargeant said: "We hope this case will deter others from stocking illicit tobacco and selling to under-age customers.

"Public safety was being undermined by stocking tobacco which would not self-extinguish."

Anyone with information about illicit tobacco can contact the Citizen's Advice Consumer Helpline on 03454 04 05 06 or can report details online at www.westsussex.gov.uk/tsreport

To find your nearest GP offering stop smoking support, visit www.westsussexwellbeing.org.uk and search 'Smoking > Services for West Sussex'.

Cllr Roger Elkins – **West Sussex County Council**

7th January 2018

Disappointment was expressed about Cllr Elkins's reference to the Travel Plan as Cllr Elkins had been present at the meeting at which the WSCC officer had said a Travel Plan would be prepared in advance of the building work starting and yet there was still no sign of the Travel Plan.

More information was sought on the de-icing scheme.

007/18 ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL (ADC)

No District Councillors were present as there was a Group Meeting at ADC. The following report had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting:

Arun District Council

A report for this evening's meeting:

147 Roundstone Drive, following confirmation by Arun District Council that the disputed land should have been conveyed to Mrs Dalwood in 2000 she has now extended her garden fence to include it.

At Full Council to be held on 10th January the Council will receive and consider recommendations on, a Brownfield Land Register (Part 1), an electric vehicle infrastructure study and the year 4 review of the Leisure and Cultural Strategy. All of these matters have implication for the residents of East Preston.

Recent Cabinet decisions of note to East Preston have been;
Because of the continued excellent service and price the extension of the current combined cleansing contract to 31st January 2023.
The adoption of new and innovative ways to allocate Disabled Facilities Grants.

Local cases in East Preston, nothing new to report yet!

Still hope to be there on time but you never know.

Best wishes

Cllr Terence Chapman – **Arun District Council**

8th January 2018

The Clerk will try to find out more about the "new and innovative ways to allocated Disabled Facilities Grants".

008/18 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 4TH DECEMBER 2017

The draft Minutes had been circulated on 5th December asking for comments by 12th December. No comments or suggestions had been received from councillors.

1161 The Council **RESOLVED** the Chairman could sign the Minutes as a true record of the meeting that took place on 4th December 2017.

This action was completed.

The Chairman thanked the Clerk for the Minutes.

009/18 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 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, 25th 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 2nd 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 15th January.

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

The report, produced on 9th 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 18th 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 19th 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, 25th 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 27th 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**

2nd January 2018

Minute 632/17 – Community Engagement Committee – defibrillator – the Clerk reported the defibrillator had arrived and he and Cllr Gander had a meeting scheduled for later in the week with the intention of having the defibrillator in place by the end of the month. Cllr McElroy reported the Village Hall also had a new defibrillator.

010/18 FINANCIAL MATTERS

The Accounts for December 2017 had been distributed to Members in advance of the meeting.

1162 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the outstanding Purchase Orders report for 2017/18, value £10,973.23.

1163 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Supplier Invoices Paid report for December 2017 totalling £15,587.83 including VAT.

1164 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the List of Sales Receipts & Bank Receipts by Bank report, showing £264,548.99 net for the financial year ending 31st March 2018.

The council **NOTED** the paper Bank Reconciliation to 14th December 2017. Cllr Mathias had completed a paper Bank Reconciliation in advance of the meeting.

The council NOTED the Budget Summary for the financial year to date without further comment.

The Chairman thanked the Assistant Clerk for the financial reports.

The following report, covering the next two items, had been circulated in advance of the meeting:

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 11th 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 1st 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, up from £85.31 to £87.95. 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**

2nd January 2018

011/18 FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE – BUDGET FOR 2018/19

Cllr Shah introduced this item. Most councillors present had contributed to the budget discussions at committee meetings.

1165 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to set the budget for the financial year 2018/19 at £266,237.58.

012/18 **FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE – PRECEPT FOR 2018/19**

Cllr Shah provided further detail.

The Clerk advised the meeting of the following report which had been circulated electronically earlier that day. As far as it was possible to tell, subscribers to the council's e-mailing list represented a pretty good cross-section of the population.

Budget and Precept for 2018/19

In the email to residents dated 3rd January, I included an article advising residents of the proposed increases to the council's budget and precept for the coming financial year, asking anyone with strong feelings to comment by midday today so those comments could be put before you tonight.

The email was sent to 732 recipients. At the time of writing, the email has been opened by at least 461 recipients, 63.1%. In the order in which they were received, here are the public's comments:

NS	"Regarding the precept for 2018/19, I wanted to offer my support. This is a small affordable rise, as you say. I am generally supportive of reasonable increases of tax to keep the Council running good projects."
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One of the six residents who contacted the council about last year's increase is not on the council's e-mailing list and so I forwarded her the email so she could still comment.

CA	"Thank you for taking the trouble to contact me regarding the attached E P Parish Council news contents. I have read it and it sounds as if some care and attention has been paid to arriving at the suggested increase."
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Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

8th January 2018

1166 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to set the precept for the financial year 2018/19 at £242,829.95.

013/18 **REPORTS FROM PARISH COUNCIL COMMITTEES**

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

Committees

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

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

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

29th December 2017

014/18 **AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – INTERNAL AUDIT**

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

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 31st March 2016. Subsequently, the council has extended that contract to include the financial year ending 31st 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 31st 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**

29th December 2017

Cllr Mathias spoke to this Agenda Item and said the committee was happy with the work carried out by the current Internal Auditor. That said, the committee knew it was good practice to review suppliers from time to time and was endeavouring to do so during the coming financial year.

- 1167** The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to waive Standing Order 29 to enable the extension of the existing Internal Audit contract by one year, to end with the year-ending 31st March 2019.
- 1168** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to extend the contract to R. S. Hall & Co. for the provision of internal audit services until 31st March 2019 at an estimated cost of £550 excluding VAT.

015/18 REPORTS FROM PARISH COUNCIL WORKING PARTIES

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

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 20th 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**

2nd January 2018

Cllr Tester advised a Christmas Celebrations meeting was called for 24th January at which working party members would begin to create task lists for the various activities of the Christmas Celebrations event.

016/18 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. **Freedom of Information / Data Protection requests**
4. **Postbox outside the Council Office, 10th November**
5. **East Preston Cricket Club meeting, 30th November**
6. **East Preston Village Pre-school meeting, 5th December**
7. **East Preston Business Community Business Breakfast, 7th December**
8. **Society of Local Council Clerks Sussex Branch, 8th December**
9. ***It's A Nativity*, East Preston Infant School, 13th 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, 10th November**

During the morning of the 10th 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, 30th 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, 5th 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 15th 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, 7th 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, 8th 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, 13th 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 31st 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 – 30th November – sent to 729 recipients, opened by 459 to date (63%)

Parish Council news – 21st December – sent to 732, opened by 463 to date (63.5%)

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 18th January.

15. **January Meetings and Events**

This list may be incomplete and is subject to change.

8 th	Full Council (19:00, East Preston Infant School)
15 th	Personnel Committee (details tbc)
	Amenities Committee (19:00, East Preston Infant School)
22 nd	Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00, East Preston Infant School)
24 th	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**

2nd January 2018

Although open to negotiation with the Cricket Club any replacement netting at the Warren Recreation Ground would only be being provided because the Cricket Club plays there.

Cllr Linton asked the Clerk to reconsider his decision not to include social media stats in future reports. She finds these useful and interesting.

017/18 NEW ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING (5TH FEBRUARY)

Nothing new was suggested.

The Chairman announced he was resigning the chairmanship of the council with immediate effect, this was for personal reasons. He thanked East Preston residents for welcoming him and saying hello in the morning and other parish councillors for the support they had shown him over his almost six years as Chairman. He would remain a councillor until the end of the current council year.

The meeting concluded at 19:44

Chairman: *Cllr Hazel Tester* Date: **5th February 2018**

END