



EAST PRESTON PARISH COUNCIL

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

01903 770050

eastpreston.arun.gov.uk

Email: eparishcouncil@btconnect.com

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING - EAST PRESTON

24th April 2017

The Annual Parish Meeting at East Preston duly convened and held this day at the East Preston Infant School, Lashmar Road, East Preston.

Present:

Parish Councillors Christine Barber, Lisa Duff, Joop Duijf (in the Chair), Barbara Gale, Pat Gander, Elizabeth Linton, Glyn Mathias, Rick McElroy, Danny Shah, Hazel Tester and Steve Toney

District Councillors Ricky Bower and Mike Clayden (East Preston with Kingston)

East Preston Infant School – Claire New and Stephen Hill

East Preston Junior School – Kathy Lockyear and Helen Standing

West Sussex County Council – Leigh Hunnikin and Graham Olway

Members of the Public:

Judith and Richard Akhurst, Celeste Amoo, Jack Cogman, David and Maureen Fraser, Roger Elkins, Peter Galloway, Mike and Jackie Johnson, John Kimmer, Dorothy Lee, Graham Lewis, Roddie MacLeod, John and Sheila Nettleton, Sioned Vos and Jennifer Wallace

Clerk to the Council: Assistant Clerk to the Council:

Simon Cross
Tracy Khoo

Apologies:

Parish Councillors David Moore and Paul Kelly; Arun District Councillor Terry Chapman; West Sussex County Councillor Peter Evans

The Chairman of the Council, Councillor Joop Duijf, opened the meeting at 19:02, and thanked and welcomed those attending. Cllr Duijf especially welcomed Leigh Hunnikin and Graham Olway from West Sussex County Council,

Claire New and Stephen Hill from East Preston Infant School and Kathy Lockyear and Helen Standing from East Preston Junior School.

APM2017/01 - To confirm the Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on 18th April 2016

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 18th April 2016 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record, proposed by Cllr Hazel Tester. There were no objections.

These Minutes had previously been noted by the Parish Council at its meeting held on 9th May 2016, Parish Council Minute 327/16.

APM2017/02 - To receive the Annual Report of the East Preston Parish Council

Cllr Duijf read the following Annual Report:

“An Annual Report should reflect the highlights, being positive or negative, over the past annual council year. I am sure there are some I will forget to mention but at least you are warned. For about half of the sitting councillors this was only their second year. So by now Council is fully operational so to speak, but also still gaining knowledge and experience in the complexity of governmental rules, regulations, ever-changing legislations and, most importantly, the wishes of the parishioners.

“I start by picking up on the one resolution passed at last year’s meeting which was “unanimously to support the attempts of the East Preston Open Dinghy Club in identifying a new base in or very close to East Preston.” The council and local residents have supported the Open Dinghy Club but without success to date. The Club left its home at the bottom of Sea Road at the end of 2016, after a residency of over forty years. We have no further information on the future of the club at this time.

“At the council, we continue to be very busy. Some council activities are very visible like the *Food and Drink Festival* and *Christmas Celebrations* event whilst many others are carried out in the background. My personal feeling is that because of all the work and sometimes reduced availability of councillors, the council should discuss reducing its workload for the coming year. Although there is a lot of enthusiasm, there is also a lot of pressure on a few of us which also filters down to the council’s members of staff.

“So, what was successful and enjoyable for many? Just to mention a few such as the first-ever *East Preston Food and Drink Festival*, the third *East Preston Christmas Celebrations* in its current format and another two seasonal *Beach Cleans*. I think a thank you especially to the community volunteers on these events should be made here: thank you and hope you will be available and join for 2017 and beyond. During East Preston Festival Week we ran a Come and Meet Your Local Councillors event which was successful and appreciated by those that attended. We shall be running this event again on 8th June, we chose the date before Mrs May chose it for a little thing called a General Election.

“The presence and input to our monthly Full Council meeting by Arun District councillors and the West Sussex councillor responsible for East Preston is much appreciated and a thank-you to them all. County Cllr Peter Evans is not standing for re-election so I thank him for his work for the village over the past 12 years. It looks like with the support from Arun District Council, the MUGA (Multi Use Games Area) at Lashmar road finally will materialise. Full Council was completely surprised by the announcement of Peter Evans (WSSC) that within a couple of days there would be a drop-in consultation about the proposed extension of the junior and infant school. Parish Council and many others were unaware but the West Sussex County Council project manager has taken on board our concerns and said she will include town and parish councils more explicitly in future projects.

“Our committees and working parties come together on a regular basis and try to make East Preston the best place to live. Just a few highlights: the rotating improvement plans for the Warren Recreation Ground are still going strong and with help from the East Preston & Kingston Preservation and Horticultural Societies, the Infant and Junior Schools and the Friends of Langmead the new hedge inside the new fence on the southern side has been realised.

“A Planning Application has been submitted for refurbishing the toilet block by the Village Hall car-park, to make it more accessible for all. The refurbishments have been designed with the help of the Disability Action Group and the Special Educational Needs Child Action Team. I also thank the Disability Action Group for its fundraising activities towards this project which we hope will be completed before the end of this calendar year. Improved beach access

for all is still on the cards but is a slow process due to all kind of complications.

“At the library, we have managed to find a temporary location for the Millennium Wall-hanging donated to the Council in 2000. A lot of council time has been taken up with discussions on this at Full Council meetings and we are aware not everybody is happy with this temporary solution. Feedback on the wall-hanging’s temporary home has been limited although mainly favourable – please, if you are interested, go to the library, have a look and let us know what you think.

“Having tried to get Arun District Council to take the South Strand toilet block back early, we have decided to keep it open till the end of our lease contract in 2019. Its fate beyond 1st April 2019 lies with Arun District Council.

“In order to save the village some money, the council decided to stop funding street-lighting on the Angmering-on-Sea private estate. Most Angmering-on-Sea residents we came into contact with understood this decision. The few that did not understand did perhaps not understand no council has any legal obligation to provide streetlighting to a private estate and seemed unappreciative of the fact this council had provided streetlighting there for over twenty-five years regardless.

“The council’s orderlies keep the Village Green, Warren Recreation Ground, Two Acres and bus shelters in good order. Especially when the weather is improving this could take quite some time to tidy up as the grounds are not always left clean by users. Although there are still some irresponsible dog owners, it also should be noted that in general dog fouling has improved but on dark and rainy nights one cannot always find what is left behind.

“The Planning & Licensing Committee is top regarding the number of meetings, once every fortnight is more or less standard. Several objections the committee has made over the year referring to our Neighbourhood Plan have been recognised by Arun District. One could conclude that all the efforts put in the Plan was certainly worth doing it. Further to last year’s meeting, Planning Permission has now been granted for the Bradbury Hotel site in Station Road which will become nine new homes in Bradbury Close.

“Arun’s Local Plan has gone out for public consultation again and there is still time to air your views, however, be quick to do so as the closing date for comments is 30th May. All those homes to be built will have an impact on day-to-day life in numerous ways. Hopefully the planned dualling of the A259 might have some positive impact.

“The just published 2017 Business Community Directory will hopefully prove to be a useful publication for local residents looking for a range of local businesses and services.

“The Film Society regularly donates to East Preston’s community (like sporting equipment) so please keep attending their regular film events!

“Throughout the year, the council meets with neighbouring councils at a variety of fora.

“Finally, we all know how nice it is to hear people saying hello to each other as we walk around the village. If this does not come naturally to you, please give it a go, you will be pleasantly surprised by the reactions you receive.

“Nearly everyone in this room has chosen to live in East Preston because it is a lovely place to live. Please support this council in keeping it lovely and in making it an even better place to live. Thank you.”

APM2017/03 - To receive a short presentation from West Sussex County Council on the planned expansion of East Preston Infant and Junior Schools

Leigh Hunnikin, West Sussex County Council Project Manager, started by apologising to anyone who had received a direct invite to the drop-in public consultation event held on 6th April if the invite had come somewhat by surprise. For some time now it has been the County Council’s intention to expand the Infant and Junior Schools from two forms for each year group to three forms. Year on year, this would increase the number of pupils at the Infant School by 90 pupils and by 120 pupils at the Junior School. To facilitate this, two new classrooms were provided at the Junior School in September 2015, leaving one more classroom to be provided. The first of these additional Infant School pupils will be transferring to the Junior School in September 2018.

Ms Hunnikin was aware there were significant concerns about highways issues and inconsiderate parking in the area and the County Council was working closely with the schools to try and ease these issues.

In response to concerns raised the schools were only needing to expand in order to take children from, for example, ever-increasing amounts of housing in Angmering, Ms Hunnikin said it was testament to the high quality of the schools parents wanted to send their children here. 75% of East Preston Infant School children live in the municipal parish of East Preston.

Current research had shown 42% of pupils across the two schools either walked or scooted to school, though this figure was weather-dependant. Again, the County Council was placed to help schools improve their pupil walking stats. Additional scooter/cycle storage space was planned for both schools.

Ms Hunnikin was aware there did not seem to be sufficient enforcement of the Traffic Regulation Orders in Lashmar Road and St Mary's Drive and she was liaising with Arun District Council about this. Officers needed to attend at pick-up and drop-off times, not the middle of the day when all was well.

Ms Hunnikin explained the County Council would be the deciding authority for the Application as it fell under Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992. The Planning Applications were live or would be live imminently. Regulation 3 permitted a local authority to apply to itself for permission to build on its own land.

Mr Olway stated there had been a positive response from East Preston residents to the plans. There was a continuing growing need to education places nationally; West Sussex was not somehow different. Extra places have already been provided at primary schools in Rustington and Littlehampton and were soon to be provided at St Wilfrid's in Angmering. He said this evening's meeting would have felt very different if he and his colleagues had been there to discuss closure of the local schools.

As Cllr Duijf had said in his report, the County Council did want to work closely with Town & Parish Councils and had already learnt from the East Preston experience. Mr Olway was very pleased the meeting was being held in the Infant School as it showed how school buildings were an intrinsic part of any community not just for use for education.

Mr Olway urged those present to make comments on the Planning Applications, not just objections but where people felt positively about the expansion plans, submit supportive comments too.

Mrs Vos said she heartily supported investment in the schools and asked how much was the investment. Ms Hunnikin replied she thought there was £5m in the budget across the two schools. Mr Olway confirmed the headteachers and governing bodies of both schools were very supportive of the plans.

District Cllr Bower said he also welcomed the investment but was concerned about the safety issues of pupils from Angmering having to cross the A259 and also the Roundstone Level Crossing on their way to school. Mr Olway responded it was a parent's responsibility to ensure a child gets to school and to accompany that child as necessary. There are many reasons why a parent will choose to drive to school. This was a national problem and ongoing challenge. Was East Preston somewhere parents could maybe park slightly further away from the school and then walk the remainder? The meeting felt this was not really an option in East Preston.

Mrs Akhurst said she felt West Sussex County Council did not fully appreciate the lack of pavements in the immediate vicinity of the schools. She suggested officers come out and tried to park in local roads during drop-off and pick-up times. Ms Hunnikin replied a thorough transport assessment had been carried out and formed part of the Planning Application. Just some of the information compiled included details of parking restrictions being ignored and the extent to which school parking bleeds into neighbouring roads. East Preston is not unique in the highways-related problems it has and the County Council was coming up with a selection of possible solutions.

Mrs Amoo said she was very interested in education both globally and locally and only found out about the expansion plans on 3rd April at the East Preston Parish Council meeting. Mrs Amoo suggested in future the County Council liaised earlier with local communities, not just those people immediately likely to be affected by any changes, but also those from further afield, the impact upon whom may not be so immediately obvious. Mr Olway accepted Mrs Amoo's comments as fair. West Sussex County Council had Community Officers in each district and they could be used more effectively perhaps in such situations. Mailshotting every household in the village was not an option, so to some extent the County Council was in a no-win situation. How could it communicate better with local communities? The experience in East Preston will have a long-term positive impact across the county.

Cllr Duijf said it was brilliant a lot of information was available on the County Council's website but people did not know it was there and would not necessarily look for something they did not know was there.

District Cllr Clayden reported County Cllr Evans had said at the East Preston Parish Council meeting on 3rd April that he had only been involved in the plans since the previous week. Mrs New replied she could not comment upon what County Cllr Evans had said on 3rd April, but the expansion plans had been in discussion for about five years and Cllr Evans had been part of the process every step of the way. Mrs New and the then Chair of the governors of the Infant School had attended a Parish Council meeting about two years ago when the Application for the first temporary classrooms was on the Agenda and had explained this was the beginning of a wider expansion programme. Although the detail had only recently become known, in 2015 the Parish Council had been supportive as it usually tended to be.

District Cllr Clayden asked why the County Council was not spending money on widening and improving roads in the locality. Mr Olway replied the County Council had to prioritise available funding and there was discouragement from spending on providing additional parking at schools as that would just lead to a greater demand on that increased parking provision.

Mr Galloway asked how long the building contract was for and what contingency was there for the works not to be completed on time. Ms Hunnikin said the contract was to provide the additional temporary classroom at the Infant School in time for September 2017. All other works were to be completed by September 2018. There was a contingency to use school halls for educating, but that had an impact upon provision of Physical Education and hot meals.

Mrs Akhurst said she had already discussed with Ms Hunnikin her concern about deliveries blocking local roads. She suggested detailed signage be implemented across and beyond the village directing delivery drivers along a particular route to reduce road blockages. Ms Hunnikin replied the Planning Application would likely come with a Condition not permitting deliveries during drop-off and pick-up times. No work would be able to begin until a Construction Management Plan had been agreed.

Finally on this topic, Cllr McElroy asked what expansion plans there were for Angmering School as the increased number of pupils going through East Preston's schools would someday need to go into local secondary education too. Ms Hunnikin replied there were plans in place to increase Angmering's annual intake from 252 pupils to 270 pupils, this following a recent expansion. There was sufficient capacity "for now" but expansion works were likely for September 2018 or 2019 subject to funding.

Cllr Duijf thanked Ms Hunnikin and Mr Olway for attending and invited them to stay for the rest of the meeting and to have a drink after the meeting. On this occasion, Ms Hunnikin and Mr Olway chose to leave the meeting at this point.

APM2017/04 - To receive a report from the Arun District councillors representing East Preston.

District Cllr Bower confirmed the Chairman's earlier comment about the Arun Local Plan being out for public consultation at the moment. Supportive comments were just as useful as negative comments. Cllr Bower was concerned strategic gaps were being encroached upon. In response to some sites suggested, Cllr Bower said the District Council could only put forward sites which developers were willing to develop.

In the West Sussex County Council Infrastructure Delivery Plan there was provision for six new primary and one new secondary school in Arun. The councils were preparing for a significant bulge in education needs by 2020.

The recent verdict by the High Court to uphold a decision by Arun District Council not to allow 100 homes to be built south of Ford Lane in Yapton was a significant decision for any community with a Neighbourhood Plan.

District Cllr Clayden said he had been the Chairman of Arun's Audit & Governance Committee over the past year. He was pleased to report Arun was one of very few councils to have received an unqualified audit report of its Housing Benefits payments.

He was also Deputy Cabinet Minister for social housing. During the year, Arun reclaimed fourteen properties which had been incorrectly let and had bought a further seven houses into the social housing pool.

APM2017/05 - To receive a report from the West Sussex County councillor representing East Preston.

County Cllr Peter Evans had given his apologies for the meeting.

APM2017/06 – Public question time.

Cllr Duijf opened the meeting up to members of the public to have their say on any matter affecting East Preston.

Mr Kimmer asked whether there was a start date for the dualling of the A259, and how does the project link up with other projected road improvements in the area? District Cllr Bower said West Sussex County Council had £12m set aside for improvements to the A259 from the Goring Crossways roundabout to the Tesco roundabout in Littlehampton. He believed the work would be starting imminently. Works on the Lyminster by-pass were scheduled to start in early 2018 but the District Council was still trying to get the County Council and the developer to use the same contractor for the two parts of this work. The Parish and District Councils had tried to get Old Worthing Road included in the A259 improvements but County had refused. The County Council had conceded to provide a left-hand filter lane for westbound traffic on the A259 at the junction with the A280 Angmering by-pass. The Treasury had again committed to pay for an Arundel by-pass.

Mrs Akhurst questioned the length of the filter lane mentioned above as she had been informed it needed to be at least, she thought, 100m long.

Mrs Amoo asked whether the Parish Council would be carrying out any further public consultation on charging for use of the Village Green car-park. She and her neighbours in Sea Road were concerned the car-park would be left empty by people refusing to pay to use it and these people would park further and further up Sea Road. There were already seasonal difficulties in the area, but charging for the car-park could make these year-round difficulties whilst not raising much income for the council. Cllr Duijf replied the council had consulted through the article in the Winter 2017 Newsletter. Cllr McElroy said the scheme would be reviewed once it had been implemented and if it was not working, it would be withdrawn.

Mrs Akhurst updated the meeting on the East Preston Flood Action Group, advising it was now affiliated to the National Flood Forum. The group had applied to West Sussex County Council for some Operation Watershed funding and was arranging multi-agency meetings. The group was focussing its attentions on examples of standing water such as in Worthing Road and Roundstone Crescent after heavy rainfall.

Mrs Wallace, Mrs Lee and Mrs Akhurst all questioned the fate of the fig tree outside the Village Hall with the council's plans to improve the toilet block there. Cllr McElroy said two reports had been received recommending the tree be removed but a final decision was yet to be made. Cllr Duijf read the extract from the council's annual tree report which had only been received over the weekend before the meeting, "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". Cllr McElroy said this report would be discussed at the Amenities Committee's next meeting which will be in May.

With no further questions forthcoming, Cllr Duijf closed the meeting at 20:35 and invited those present to join the council for a drink and less formal conversation.

Chairman: *Cllr Steve Toney*
Cllr Steve Toney

Date: 21st May 2018