

# **MONTHLY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

**6<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2020**

## **SUPPORTING PAPERS**

**Please note not every Agenda Item will have a supporting paper.**

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**Agenda Item 2**

**Doug Medhurst**

Please be aware, in line with council policy, there will be one minute's silence to mark the passing on Sunday, 21<sup>st</sup> June, of former councillor and Chairman, Doug Medhurst. Doug was a councillor from co-option in September 1984 until the early 2000s. Doug served a period of Chairman from the late 1980s until the early 1990s. Owing to the pandemic it has not been possible for me to provide more accurate dates as I have not been able to access the Minutes held at the Records Office.

The council sent a condolences card to Doug's daughter, Alison.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

22<sup>nd</sup> June 2020

**Agenda Item 3**

**Chris Roberts**

Please be aware, in line with council policy, there will be one minute's silence to mark the passing also on Monday, 22<sup>nd</sup> June, of former councillor and Chairman, Chris Roberts. Chris served two separate periods as a Parish Councillor. Firstly, at the beginning of the millennium and then again from May 2007. He became Chairman from May 2009 until standing down at the Local Election in May 2011. Owing to the pandemic it has not been possible for me to provide more accurate dates as I have not been able to access the Minutes held at the Records Office.

The council sent a condolences card to Chris's family.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

22<sup>nd</sup> June 2020

**Agenda Item 10**

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

The draft Minutes were circulated to all councillors on 11<sup>th</sup> June, asking for suggested amendments by 18<sup>th</sup> June. None were received. Cllr Gander replied the "Minutes look fine."

## **Agenda Item 11**

### **Monthly Update Report**

1. **Introduction**
2. **Minute 328/20 – Annual Financial Matters – Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year-ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020**
3. **Minute 338/20 – South Strand Community Toilets**

1. **Introduction**

This is the report covering items discussed during Full Council meetings up to and including the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

2. **Minute 328/20 – Annual Financial Matters – Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year-ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020**

The Annual Return supporting paperwork was collated by Tracy and I on 24<sup>th</sup> June and Tracy posted it that afternoon. We received confirmation it had been received by the External Auditors on 29<sup>th</sup> June.

3. **Minute 338/20 – South Strand Community Toilets**

I have let the committee of the South Strand Community Toilets know of Cllr Bradshaw's appointment as council representative. We have agreed to have a meeting soon to discuss how this will work in practice.

Simon Cross – Clerk to the Council

29<sup>th</sup> June 2020

## **Agenda Item 13**

### **Committees**

Since the last meeting, the following committee meetings have taken place: Amenities on 15<sup>th</sup> June; Planning & Licensing on 22<sup>nd</sup> June; Finance & General Purposes and Major Events both on 29<sup>th</sup> June.

Draft Minutes from each of these meetings, may have been circulated to all councillors ahead of this evening's meeting.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

26<sup>th</sup> June 2020

## **Agenda Item 13a**

### **Amenities Committee**

**Sea Road Toilets** – The two Unisex toilets were reopened on 22<sup>nd</sup> June, the new door locking mechanisms have been fitted and appear to be working correctly and the flush problem has been resolved.

**Car Park Scheme** - Due to COVID19 lockdown, the face to face business consultation, regarding the car park scheme and traffic management could not take place. Therefore, the committee wrote to all shopfront businesses at the southern end of Sea Road asking for their thoughts in writing.

The committee reviewed the responses received from six businesses by the original closing date and agreed to continue operating the current car parking scheme, on a rolling contract basis. The committee will be continually reviewing the car parking scheme and traffic situation.

A couple of responses received following the closing date will be put before the committee's next meeting.

**Bank area at the Junction of Lashmar Road and North Lane** – The COVID 19 health crisis caused disruptions to the contractor's Services, so the project had to be placed on hold. The programme to clear the area has now resumed and it is hoped the weed and bramble control will be completed in time for planting up in the Autumn.

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

29<sup>th</sup> June 2020

## **Agenda Item 13b**

### **Audit & Governance Committee**

The committee has not met but is scheduled to meet on 20<sup>th</sup> July.

Membership currently stands at Cllr Linton as Chairman of the Community Engagement and Major Events Committees, Cllr Mathias as Chairman of the Planning & Licensing Committee, and Cllr McElroy as Chairman of the Amenities and Finance & General Purposes Committee. Cllr Toney is permitted to attend and vote as Chairman of the Council.

Chairmanship of the Personnel Committee should be resolved in July after which it will be possible to know whether other councillors who put themselves forward will be able to sit on the committee.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

26<sup>th</sup> July 2020

## **Agenda Item 13c**

### **Community Engagement Committee**

As the planned pre-school picnic has not been able to go ahead, I suggested to the committee it would be nice to spend a small amount of the sum budgeted for such an event on some cakes for the East Preston Village Pre-school which has returned to limited operation. Electronically, all committee members agreed this was a lovely idea and so two cakes for 10 people each will be given to the pre-school on 7<sup>th</sup> July. We have asked for some sort of photograph for publicity purposes.

The two householders for the two new blue plaques have both now been approached officially and have confirmed their agreement, in principle, to having a blue plaque attached to their properties. Initial wording has been sent to the manufacturers and initial design received.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

26<sup>th</sup> June 2020

## **Agenda Item 13d**

### **Finance & General Purposes Committee**

The committee met on 29<sup>th</sup> June via Zoom.

Cllr McElroy was appointed Chairman again and Cllr Gunston was appointed Vice-Chairman for the first time.

The committee completed its annual review of its Terms of Reference. Minor changes were made to bring them into line with other committees.

The committee also considered a request for financial assistance from the East Preston Cricket Club, and to contribute £1,000 immediately from the Warren Recreation Ground safety budget line. The committee agreed to recommend a further donation of £500 to be considered under Agenda Item 15a.

The committee considered a number of Grant Aid requests received and agreed to make awards to the following organisations: 4SIGHT Vision Support; Arun Basic Essential Transport; East Preston Village Branch – Healthy Walks in Arun; St Barnabas Hospice; Victim Support (Sussex Area); West Sussex Mediation Service.

The committee agreed to set up a working party to look at the future use of the flat above the Council Office and the replacement of the existing office frontage. This working party is open to any councillor and already includes Cllrs Linton, McElroy and Wilkinson. The Terms of Reference for the working party will be agreed at its first meeting. Please let me know if you would like to join.

The committee would like to consider ways in which it might help the post-pandemic recovery of the village. Any suggestions should be forwarded to Cllr McElroy as Chairman of the committee.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

29<sup>th</sup> June 2020

## **Agenda Item 13e**

### **Major Events Committee**

The committee met via the Zoom online meeting application on Monday, 29<sup>th</sup> June.

In a meeting at which most items had to be deferred to the next meeting, pending further government advice on large events, the one bright light was Alison's idea to have a virtual element of the cancelled Food & Drink Festival through social media.

Sticking to the original event's date of 29<sup>th</sup> August, the businesses which were successful in their bid for a pitch this year will be invited to take part in a virtual Food & Drink Festival. On the day, they will be able to post on social media using a specific Food & Drink Festival hashtag which members of the public can follow throughout the day. Those businesses will be able to publicise how members of the public can obtain their goods, for the more take-home products, or be able to show videos of them preparing the eat-now offerings they would have been selling. Businesses are already thinking of what videos they can supply to us.

The committee felt this was a great idea which it hoped the public would welcome as enthusiastically as the businesses.

*Funday Sunday* has a new date of 18<sup>th</sup> October, provisionally.

Committee members are thinking of which elements of the annual East Preston Christmas Celebrations could successfully take place on 21st November. The committee wants to be able to offer the village something, but doesn't want to offer a damp squib.

The committee would like to organise some form of event to thank the East Preston Voluntary Service volunteers, possibly including their service users, but until lockdown is eased fully, it is only possible to work on some loosely-sketched ideas.

Finally, the committee considered an offer from the organisers of the French Market, willing to set up on the Village Green on 25<sup>th</sup> July. After much serious discussion, the committee reluctantly agreed it would not be able to manage the possible crowds coming into the village if the weather was good on that day. The organisers will be thanked for their offer and asked to keep us in mind for future dates.

Cllr Elizabeth Linton –

**Chairman of the Community Engagement Committee**

30<sup>th</sup> June 2020

## **Agenda Item 13f**

### **Personnel Committee**

The committee is scheduled to meet on 20<sup>th</sup> July.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

19<sup>th</sup> June 2020

## **Agenda Item 13g**

### **Planning & Licensing Committee**

The committee met via the Zoom online meeting application on Monday, 22<sup>nd</sup> June.

Four Applications were considered and the committee agreed to raise objections to three, in The Ridings, Golden Avenue and Vermont Drive.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

23<sup>rd</sup> June 2020

## **Agenda Item 14a**

### **Amenities Committee – Warren Recreation Ground children’s play area and outdoor gym equipment**

Cllr McElroy to introduce this item.

**Council is asked to consider the re-opening of the Warren Recreation Ground children’s play area and outdoor gym equipment.**

In a press release issued on 23<sup>rd</sup> June, the government said, “In order to begin restoring the arts and cultural sector, some leisure facilities and tourist attractions may also reopen, if they can do so safely – this includes outdoor gyms and playgrounds, cinemas, museums, galleries, theme parks and arcades, as well as libraries, social clubs, places of worship and community centres.”

The key words here are “if they can do so safely”, although little is given in the way of what constitutes safely and what does not.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

26<sup>th</sup> June 2020

## **Agenda Item 15a**

### **Finance & General Purposes Committee – East Preston Cricket Club**

Cllr McElroy to introduce this item.

**Council is asked to donate a further £500 to the East Preston Cricket Club to help pay for repairs to the safety netting on both the eastern and western boundaries of the Warren Recreation Ground.**

At its meeting on Monday, 29<sup>th</sup> June, the Finance & General Purposes Committee considered a request for financial support with a netting repairs quote for £3,390 (including VAT) for repairs to the safety netting on both the eastern and western boundaries of the Warren Recreation Ground. Keith Chamberlain, Chairman and President of the club attended the meeting. Any councillor wishing to see the quotation can ask me for a copy.

At the time of writing, cricket is not permitted under pandemic rules, but the England and Wales Cricket Board and the Sussex League both believe some friendlies will be possible after the end of July. Confirmation on that may well have been received by the time of our meeting. Before any cricket can be played though, the club will need to have repaired the netting. In the past, costs for installing the original netting and then the extended netting were believed to have been split 2/3 by the council to 1/3 by the club. The club accepts the maintenance of the netting is its responsibility, but currently it does not have the money. Income is non-existent so far this year as no subs have been paid, no cricket teas have been purchased, no stoolball income has been forthcoming and the pre-school has not been using the Pavilion providing rental income (although it is operating again now).

The committee AGREED to donate the whole £1,000 from the Warren Recreation Ground safety budget line for the current financial year. The committee also AGREED to ask Full Council for £500 from the council's reserves top up the £1,000 grant to £1,500.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

29<sup>th</sup> June 2020

## **Agenda Item 15b**

### **Finance & General Purposes Committee – budget line overspend**

Cllr McElroy to introduce this item.

**Council is asked to approve an overspend of £90 on the email budget line.**



In May 2015, council resolved, “to agree budget-holding committees can be delegated the authority to spend up to 5% over on individual budget lines without reference to Full Council, until further notice.” (Minute 288/15, Resolution 0892)

Pretty much council has done that and this may be the first occasion we have brought such a resolution to the council.

The budget line for .gov.uk email addresses was set to £234 for the year, thirteen councillors at £18 per year each. After the budget for this had been set, central government decided councils could no longer show non .gov.uk email addresses on their websites. This prompted the council to get a new email address for each office-based member of staff, and then the pandemic meant the East Preston Voluntary Service needed a .gov.uk email address too, bringing the total to eighteen. That means an overspend on that budget line of £90 this year, which is 38%.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

29<sup>th</sup> June 2020

## **Agenda Items 16a-b**

### **Working Parties**

The Flat and Frontage Working Party has been set up by the Finance & General Purposes Committee and currently comprises Cllrs Linton, McElroy and Wilkinson. Other councillors are welcome to join – just let me know. The Terms of Reference will be agreed at the working party’s first meeting.

The Leases Working Party has not met since the last meeting of the council.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

29<sup>th</sup> June 2020

## **Agenda Item 17a**

### **Annual Parish Meeting**

**Council is asked to note the draft Minutes from the Annual Parish Meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2020.**

These can be found at Appendix A below. Once noted, the Minutes will go forward for approval at next year’s Annual Parish Meeting.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

26<sup>th</sup> June 2020

## **Agenda Item 18**

### **Clerk's Report**

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Police matters**
- 3. Freedom of Information / Data Protection requests**
- 4. East Preston Voluntary Service**
- 5. East Preston Business Community Business Breakfast, 3<sup>rd</sup> June**
- 6. ADC Planning Review 2020: Town & Parish Councils, 11<sup>th</sup> June**
- 7. Social media**
- 8. MailChimp stats**
- 9. A selection of things we have been asked since the last meeting**
- 10. Recent bouquets and complaints**
- 11. Leave**
- 12. July meetings and events**

#### **1. Introduction**

This is the report mainly covering June 2020 and matters which may not arise elsewhere on the agenda.

#### **2. Police matters**

On 16<sup>th</sup> June, I received the following email from PCSO Neil Billingham, "I understand you have had contact from residents regarding issues at a Bus Stop in North Lane. This appears to be just one location that is coming to notice, along with Warren and Langmeads Recs. I have been trying to patrol these, but each time I have been on a late shift recently, it has rained, so the groups I want to speak to have not been there!!! I have set up a problem solving file at our end to start targeting this and will be requesting, with Inspector support, some patrols across the late evening into early hours. Hopefully, this will enable us to get some names etc. and do some prevention work to solve this. If there is any more information or any residents who have spoken to the council that may benefit from some follow up from me, please do let me know."

As of 25<sup>th</sup> June, one of the residents most affected by the problems in the bus shelter between the junctions with Orchard Road and Elm Avenue was happy the problem seemed to have subsided.

On 26<sup>th</sup> June, I received an email from a local resident concerned about the anti-social behaviour of a resident of Sea Road. Initially I have passed the concerns on to the anti-social behaviour team at ADC. The anti-social behaviour officer who has worked with the Sea Road resident before has been in touch with the latest reporter and has confirmed he will be liaising with Sussex Police in investigating further.

Residents continue to be concerned about anti-social behaviour, both standard and pandemic-related. The advice continues to be they should contact Sussex Police direct to build up the evidence Sussex Police needs to authorise a greater number of patrols in the village.

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

The council received no Freedom of Information or Data Protection requests during the month of June.

### **4. East Preston Voluntary Service**

The service continues to run supporting 150 households in the village with a similar number of volunteers. We have started to see some volunteers drop out of the scheme as they return to work. The impact of this seems to have been minimal.

On 1<sup>st</sup> July, the current coordinators of the service will be having a conference call to consider how best to wind down the service as the easing of the lockdown continues. The conference call will also consider whether some form of longer-term replacement service should be considered.

### **5. East Preston Business Community Business Breakfast, 3<sup>rd</sup> June**

Cllr Linton and I attended this Business Breakfast which was mainly checking in with some of the regular Business Breakfast attendees. There were some lively views exchanged about the long-term impact of the pandemic on the economy and whether or not the government has in place what its needs to support a wide range of businesses.

### **6. ADC Planning Review 2020: Town & Parish Councils, 11<sup>th</sup> June**

I attended this short afternoon Zoom call led by the man contracted by ADC to review its current Planning Department methods and results. This was the second of two calls for town and parish council reps to have their say. Lyminster & Crossbush and Ford were the other two councils represented on this particular call. The consultant asked us to say how we felt about the Planning Department.

### **7. Social media**

These are the Facebook posts published since the last supporting papers which reached more than 500 people:

- Post informing residents palm oil had been found on East Preston beach – 5,451 people
- Lost keys on 18<sup>th</sup> June - 972

† Food & Drink Festival page

▲ East Preston Business Community page

\* East Preston Christmas Celebrations page

(posts up to and including 28<sup>th</sup> June)

The number of people currently liking the council on Facebook is 1,328, a increase of 8 over the last report.

#### 8. **MailChimp stats**

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

Parish Council news – 27<sup>th</sup> May – sent to 835 recipients, opened by 571 (68.4%)

Parish Council news – 3<sup>rd</sup> June – sent to 836 recipients, opened by 593 (71.3%)

For comparison, the email sent on 1<sup>st</sup> June three years ago, was only sent to 698 recipients, and was only opened by 427, 61.4%. I think the approximately 20% increase in subscribers and the increase in people opening the e-newsletters shows people are far more interested in what the council is doing for the village than three years ago.

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

"I've noticed in the last few issues that you have not given the results of the previous crossword so people can check how they went. You only issue a new one. Can we go back to printing the last results."

"Do you know any dog groomers?"

#### 10. **Recent bouquets and complaints**

(In addition to anything reported above)

From a lady who wrote in asking about the wildflower meadows: "Bless you Dawn AND Bless E.P. I walk most mornings for an hour and finish with a walk down Sea Lane and along greensward. The knitted Bikes. Scooters. Trikes are a revelation. So uplifting. Please can you tell whoever did all that hard work it truly is greatly appreciated. What a place to be in. Stay safe & well. We need more P.C.'s & people like you all."

An Angmering resident emailed Cllr Linton, "Not sure if you are still on the East Preston Council, but I had to write to say how wonderful East Preston is looking with the addition of all the "knitted" bicycles. East Preston always has a buzz about it but the bicycles just brought smiles to M and I during our walk today. Added to that the wild flowers on the green are just looking wonderful. Vibrant and a total delight with California poppies I haven't seen before. Please thank the Council for all the hard work they do - "as a non inhabitant" I always wish I lived there."

A resident of Hazelmead Drive called to talk about a problem with her special bin collection. At the end of the call, the caller thanked the council for the fantastic job it does around the village. A week later the resident rang into the office to thank us for having sorted her bin collection for her.

From a resident of Hillview Crescent, "Having just driven through the village this morning, we thought how lucky we all are to live here! Wonderful wild flowers, and the marvellous knitted bikes, truly inspiring. No litter either..."

From a resident of Sea Road, "Very well done to whoever put down the bark chippings in the Warren Recreation Ground." (However, this has caused a concern from neighbours which will be discussed by the Amenities Committee in August.)

From a resident of Westfield Avenue who had queries about palm oil on beaches, “Thanks so much for this - much appreciated!”

From a Felpham Parish Councillor after I had provided his colleague with information on blue plaques, “Thank you so much for your email to our Chairman. I could not have hoped for a better email to be sent to him.”

From a resident of Normandy Drive who attended the Annual Parish Meeting, “It was so nice to come to the meeting and feel involved in what’s goes on in our village - thanks so much.”

#### 11. **Leave**

I shall possibly be on leave on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> July.

#### 12. **July Meetings and Events**

This list may be incomplete and is subject to change.

- 1<sup>st</sup> East Preston Business Community Business Breakfast (08:00, Zoom)
- 6<sup>th</sup> Full Council (19:00, Zoom)
- 13<sup>th</sup> Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00, Zoom)  
Amenities Committee (19:00, Zoom)
- 20<sup>th</sup> Personnel Committee (time tbc, Zoom)  
Audit & Governance Committee (time tbc, Zoom)
- 27<sup>th</sup> Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00, Zoom)  
Community Engagement Committee (19:00, Zoom)

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**

29<sup>th</sup> June 2020

## **Agenda Item 19**

### **Council Office commemorative bench**

**Council is asked to** consider the purchase of a further two plaques to be attached to the bench outside the Council Office, one each to commemorate former Chairmen of the Council, Doug Medhurst, Chris Roberts and Nicholas Myer. This as at an estimated purchase cost of £90 for the three.

Councillors will be familiar with the blue bench outside the Council Office which commemorates three councillors who were deemed worthy of a plaque because of their contribution to the council and the village.

Following the recent deaths of former Chairmen of the Council, Doug Medhurst and Chris Roberts, initially I thought we could add a further two plaques to the bench to commemorate their contribution to the council and the village. I thought one either side of the three existing plaques would create a nice balance. I then remembered Nicholas Myer passed away in 2015, also a former Chairman of the council. I would suggest we now commemorate all three of these former Chairmen of the council on the slat below the one already being used in this way.

Plaques are currently retailing at £24.50 each. There is no specific budget line for plaques so I would suggest council agrees to spend up to £90 from this year's Contingency budget line (of £10,000). The estimated purchase cost of £90 does not include installation, that will fall within the council's handyman's usual workload.



Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

26<sup>th</sup> June 2020

## **Agenda Items 20 and 21**

### **Other meetings and events – Part 1**

**No reports to be considered as far as I know.**

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

29<sup>th</sup> June 2020

## **Agenda Item 22**

### **August meeting**

**Council is asked to consider whether or not to hold an August meeting.**

Many councils do not hold a meeting in August. This council sometimes holds an August meeting, sometimes it does not – for example, our last August meeting was in 2015.

Even if council decides this evening a meeting is not required, there is always the ability to call a meeting should an urgent matter arise.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

26<sup>th</sup> June 2020

# **Appendix A**

## **Annual Parish Meeting**

**Council is asked to note the draft Minutes from the Annual Parish Meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2020.**

### **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING - EAST PRESTON**

**22<sup>nd</sup> June 2020**

The Annual Parish Meeting at East Preston duly convened and held this day via the Zoom online meeting application.

**Present:** Parish Councillors Christine Bowman, Kit Bradshaw, Andrea Chapman, Lisa Duff, Barbara Gale, Pat Gander, John Gunston, Elizabeth Linton, Glyn Mathias, David Moore, Steve Toney (in the Chair) and Steve Wilkinson

West Sussex County Councillor Roger Elkins (East Kingston and Ferring)

Arun District Councillor Ricky Bower

Members of the Public: One member of the public

Clerk to the Council: Simon Cross

**Apologies:** None

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The Chairman of the Council, Councillor Steve Toney, opened the meeting at 19:00, and thanked and welcomed those attending.

#### **APM2020/01 - To confirm the Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2019**

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2019 were agreed to be a true record. The meeting agreed these could be signed by Cllr Toney when he was next in the Council Office.

These Minutes had previously been noted by the Parish Council at its meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2019, Parish Council Minute 417/19.

#### **APM2020/02 - To receive the Annual Report of the East Preston Parish Council**

Cllr Toney's report had been made available to all attendees before the start of the meeting. Cllr Toney asked if anyone present needed him to read it; nobody said they did.

The report, which was to be included in the Summer 2020 Newsletter, read:

“Here is the council's Annual Report for the past financial year.

“As I start to write this report, it is 1<sup>st</sup> April. Nearly three months later, it is no April Fool's joke the world is still in

the grip of COVID-19, the Coronavirus. I am very proud at the way in which this council and the village as a whole has risen to the challenge of looking after our less able neighbours during this crisis.

“As it became clear a lockdown was very likely, this council’s Community Engagement Committee took the seed of an idea and transformed that, almost overnight, into the East Preston Voluntary Service. All councillors and council officers have either worked as service coordinators within the service or have been volunteers or, where neither of those have been possible, have supported the initiative from afar. The service coordinators in particular have worked especially hard to ensure local residents, unable to help themselves as much as they usually would, have not been left out in the cold. As time passed, we became aware of West Sussex County Council setting up its Community Hub, and we asked our volunteers whether or not they would be happy to have their details passed on to the county council as we fully believed its Community Hub service would replace our own East Preston Voluntary Service. However, the reverse was true and some called to the Community Hub service were referred to our own service, and we helped wherever we could. In addition to the predicted tasks of shopping and prescription collecting, volunteers have also mown lawns, helped find a collecting laundry service, talked to a few lonely people, collecting people’s rent money and paid their rent for them and other diverse activities.

“But what of the first eleven and a half months of the council’s year?

“The 2019-2020 council year started with the Local Elections at the beginning of May. All twelve of the sitting councillors stood for re-election together with one other member of the public. As there are thirteen spaces on the council, there was no need for people to come out and vote, nor was there a need for the massive co-option exercise which had been necessary in 2015. This allowed the council a degree of continuity not seen on some other local councils. Cllr Gunston was the one new member and I hope he will agree that he has fitted in well. I was very pleased and proud to have been re-elected Chairman of the Council with the ever-reliable Cllr Elizabeth Linton as Vice-Chairman.

“In August, Cllr Danny Shah resigned from the council for personal reasons. After a co-option exercise, Cllr Kit Bradshaw took up office in November, bringing the council back up to full strength.

“The biggest project to conclude during the year was the refurbishment of the Sea Road toilet block. We believe the toilet block was originally built in the late 1940s. It had long been little better than functional, but for the past few years the council has been working towards refurbishing the toilets, not just upgrading the existing Ladies and Gents but making half of the block into the best possible Hoist-Assisted Toilet possible in the space available, whilst using the other half of the block to create two spacious unisex cubicles. Our thanks to the local businesses that helped bring the project to fruition and all the individuals and organisations who helped with the funding of the project.

“Staying with toilets and one of the matters raised at last year’s Annual Parish Meeting, the council’s lease on the South Strand Toilet Block expired on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 and we chose not to renew the lease on an asset which is outside this council’s boundary. However, the council has agreed to provide some financial support for the new, independent South Strand Community Toilets group, in recognition of the value the toilet block provides to residents of and visitors to East Preston.

“Events-wise, the council added another Food & Drink Festival and another Christmas Celebrations to its tally. New in the past year was Funday Sunday, an initiative aimed at bringing together some local residents who might otherwise be home alone all day Sunday. Home alone doesn’t just mean home alone on your own, it can also mean home alone with your partner, not seeing anyone else for the whole day. Our first Funday Sunday was held in October on a Sunday afternoon in the Village Hall. About 25 local residents attended and spent the afternoon dancing to live music supplied by Vintage Candy. When they weren’t dancing, guests enjoyed a full afternoon tea and lively conversation. We hope to be able to run at least one Funday Sunday this year, but this will depend upon government advice on social distancing.

“As part of East Preston Festival, the council ran a successful Come and Meet Your Local Councillors event. Attendance was back up on 2018 although the weather was unremarkable. As the event coincided with the Alzheimers Society’s *Cupcake Day*, the council offered refreshments in exchange for a voluntary donation. Thanks to Cllr Chapman’s delicious cupcakes, we were able to donate £50 to the Alzheimers Society. It is sad this year’s Festival will not be able to go ahead because of the pandemic, but the council will offer whatever help it can to ensure next year’s Festival is one of the best ever.

“Financially, the council has been careful with your money whilst still working to improve life in the village. In their most recent assessments, the council’s independent internal and external auditors both raised no major concerns about the management of the council.



“The council is always approachable and willing to consider ideas you have for ways in which life in the village can be improved. Please submit suggestions in writing (letter or email) so the correct committee can consider them or our officers can report on previous discussions on the same matter. We look forward to hearing your ideas and hopefully implementing some of them to make the village even lovelier.

“I would like to finish by thanking my fellow councillors for their hard work throughout the year and their support of me, and also by thanking the council’s officers who really do work tirelessly for the village.”

No questions were asked of the Chairman.

### **APM2020/03 - To receive a report from the Arun District councillors representing East Preston.**

District Cllr Ricky Bower started by saying the Conservative group was now the largest at Arun District Council following the upset of the Local Elections in May 2019. However, the group was not in administration of the council, that was being carried out by the Liberal Democrats in alliance the Independents, without a formal agreement. This was a very frustrating situation for Conservative District Councillors.

The Local Plan will be reviewed sometime in the next five years as the housing requirement is 2,500 short of the identified housing needs. The Liberal Democrat / Independent group was seeking to prevent the development of several sites included in the Local Plan as Strategic Sites, opposition which would almost certainly lead to developer success as appeal. There was a threat to the East Preston – Kingston strategic gap with a plan to shift development away from Strategic Sites on to other sites. Highdown Hill was also under threat from inappropriate development.

Cllr Bower reported the leader of the Conservative Group had changed from Cllr Terry Chapman to Cllr Shaun Gunner, elected last year as a District Councillor for Rustington East.

With reference to the COVID-19 pandemic, the District Council had just had a meeting at which it was prophesied the council would have more than a £5m shortfall. Central government was looking to make more money available to offset such situations.

In response to a question from Cllr Toney, Cllr Bower said there were grants available from the District Council for the provision of hand-sanitiser stations. The Clerk added he had been in touch with some Community Engagement councillors and some local businesses about what we could apply for from this fund, and hand sanitisers and signage were the top suggestions.

### **APM2020/04 - To receive a report from the West Sussex County councillor representing East Preston.**

County Cllr Roger Elkins started by thanking “all those involved in the fantastic activities in East Preston.” He noted everyone’s disappointment at the unavoidable cancellation of events that have been “most enjoyable to attend” in previous years.

Cllr Elkins continued by giving a quick indication of how the budget of approximately £550m was spent. Adult Social Care costs £200m. That puts a major pressure on other services offered by the council. Children & Young People’s budget is £170m, a £12m increase over the previous year following an OFSTED report into the service. The increase was mainly being used for the placement of children, over 700 children were currently placed away from their families in the county, a significant increase over the past few years. In comparison, the Fire & Rescue Service has a budget of £35m. A recent independent report into the Fire & Rescue Service noted several improvements in the Fire & Rescue Service.

Back in October 2019, Cllr Paul Marshall became Leader of the Council, replacing Cllr Louise Goldsmith. Cllr Duncan Crow had become the new Cabinet Member for the Fire & Rescue Service and Communities, these changes ahead of the County Council Elections in 2021.

Moving on to talking about Highways, there was further consultation on the works planned for the A27, following a challenge by the South Downs National Park Authority. The council was still awaiting confirmation of the route from Highways England. Cllr Elkins hoped the works would be delivered in 2022.

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, work on the A259 had stopped. Cllr Elkins was pleased to report the work was expected to start again in late summer. The budget was still in place.

Within East Preston, there were Traffic Regulation Order designs being drawn up for Sea Road and Lashmar Road. Details of these are imminent. There was some debate as to how the Traffic Regulation Orders could be advertised within the COVID-19 world.

Cllr Elkins reported the Community Hub set up in response to the pandemic was in touch with between 10-11,000 residents across the county. This was working well, the majority of the 10-11,000 residents were being supported by their own local communities, only a few hundred needed to be served directly by WSCC.

In response to a question about when OFSTED would be re-inspecting the Children and Young People's Service, Cllr Elkins said he would need to find out an answer to that question and then report back. Cllr Elkins confirmed the WSCC Cabinet received regular update reports on the how the Children and Young People's Service was performing.

**APM2020/05 - To consider any written resolutions received by the council no later than 17<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

The Clerk to the Council confirmed no such resolutions had been received.

**APM2020/06 – Public question time.**

Cllr Toney asked Mrs M if she had any questions to which Mrs M replied that she had no questions but she offered “many many thanks for everything that everyone is doing.” Mrs M went on to say, “All those wonderful bicycles, aren't they marvellous? Absolutely fantastic, makes up for the Festival.”

With no questions forthcoming, Cllr Toney read out the final paragraph of his report, “I would like to finish by thanking my fellow councillors for their hard work throughout the year and their support of me, and also by thanking the council's officers who really do work tirelessly for the village.”

Cllr Toney closed the meeting at 19:29.

Chairman: .....  
Cllr Steve Toney

Date: **sometime in 2021**