

**Minutes of the Meeting of the  
Preston Seton Gosford Area Partnership  
Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2025, 7-9 pm  
Pennypit Centre, Prestonpans**

**Members (and substitute members) present:**

Ben Morse, Chair and Chair of Sustainable PSG (BM)  
Janis Wilson, Vice Chair and Chair of Heritage Connections (JW)  
Cllr Colin Yorkston, East Lothian Council (CY)  
Cllr Neil Gilbert, East Lothian Council (NG)  
Pamela Fraser, Cockenzie and Port Seton Community Gala (PF)  
Sandra Bell, Chairperson Port Seton Centre Management  
Committee and Co Chair of Health & Wellbeing subgroup (SB)  
Carla Allan, Volunteer Centre East Lothian (CA)  
Owen Smith, Prestonpans Comm Centre Management Comm (OS)  
Sandy Darling, PSG Youth (SD)  
Martin Muir, Blindwells TRA (MM)  
Shannon Slight, Cockenzie & Port Seton Gala (SS)

**Others in attendance:**

Emma Brown, Connected Communities Manager, ELC (EB)  
Shirley Gillie, Business Support, ELC (SG)  
Jordan Irvine, CDO (JI)  
Lynn Marshall, Deputy Lieutenant (LM)  
Paul McLennan, MSP for East Lothian (PM)

**Apologies:**

Helen York, Longniddry Community Council (HY)  
Allan Sneddon, Prestonpans Children's Gala (AS)  
Jonathan Sharples, Co-Chair Children & Youth Network (JS)  
Alison Weir, Cockenzie & Port Seton in Bloom (AW)  
Brian Weddell, Pennypit Community Development Trust (BW)  
Angela Gentile, Circle (AG)  
Kat Prangle, Breastfeeding Lens (KP)  
Gill Harman, CDO (GH)  
Angela Gentile, Circle (AG)  
Danielle Lough, Preston Tower Parent Council (DL)  
East Lothian Foodbank

| AGENDA<br>ITEM                                   | KEY DISCUSSION POINTS  |    |
|--|--|----|
| <b>1. Welcome, Introductions &amp; Apologies</b> |  |    |
|  | <p>BM welcomes everyone along to the meeting tonight. BM confirmed we were not quorate tonight. Introductions and apologies were noted.</p> <p>BM highlighted Paul McLennan was held up and would be with us shortly.</p> <p>BM moved onto item 5 of the agenda.</p>   |    |
| <b>2. Hargreaves update on Blindwells: -</b>     |  |    |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town Centre &amp; Amenities</li> <li>• Public Transport</li> <li>• Bankton &amp; Active Travel to Prestonpans</li> <li>• Phase 2</li> </ul> <p>Hargreaves did not manage to attend the meeting. Will be rescheduled till January 2026.</p> <p>MM gave the following update: -<br/>Blindwells TRA Update for Minutes November meeting:</p> <p># TRA now holding meetings in school.</p> <p># October Meeting: (28th)<br/>Discussed points raised from AGM/ Action points moving forward.<br/>Agreed to apply to neighbourhood watch.</p> <p># November Meeting: (25th)<br/>Update and open discussion with Frances Local Community Police Officer.<br/>Confirmation of Neighbourhood Watch/ Agreed TRA would initially set this up.<br/>Royal Mail Post/Mailbox declined. Agreed to challenge decision and asked for PSG support in form of email/letter from Chair and local elected representatives. Working with Hargreaves on this, as they initially applied early this year.</p> <p>Update from Hargreaves (Niall McLean) at last night's TRA meeting:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Town Centre. Now had four notes of interest for main shopping outlet. Given a timeline of 2 years build after agreement, looking at 2027/2028 for town centre to open. Not great but agreed to look at temporary shops again.</li> <li>2. Potentially Blindwells will have 3000+ residents before town centre opens.</li> <li>3. Sustainable New Town? Public Transport? Local community facilities? All raised.</li> <li>4. Northside Bankton Junction March 26 completion.</li> <li>5. New plot being purchased by new builders to Blindwells. Will be announced soon.</li> <li>6. Bus shelter at St Joseph's side being costed/will not start to after March 26.</li> <li>7. Rail station possibly in Phase 2.</li> </ol> <p>It is clear that for all the various discussions and development strategies for Blindwells, what is missing is a People strategy. Now a chance that Blindwells will have close to 4000 residents, before town centre is open. Residents feel isolated as no facilities, poor public transport links to local communities.</p> | BM |

|   |  |           |
|---|--|-----------|
|   | <p><b>Paul McLennan MSP update – as PM joined the meeting near the end this topic was returned to.</b></p> <p>PM has agreed to meet Hargreaves prior to the meeting and will invite the Chair of the Residents Association and AP Chair to the meeting.</p> <p>PM has also spoken to the ELC Chief Executive on the issue of the Town Centre being built up. They are in discussions with Hargreaves on the matter.</p> <p>PM is meeting Taylor Wimpey; Hargreaves, East Lothian Council and Scottish Government on the issue of Blindwells 2 and happy to advise in due course.</p> <p>PM noted that possibilities for a Blindwells Railway station were now favourable following discussions with Network Rail, UK and Scottish governments as part of a Phase 2 development, where it was not possible during phase 1.</p>  |           |
| <b>3. Cockenzie Data Centre proposals</b>       |  |           |
|   | <p>BM noted that there had been a press release from East Lothian Council that noted an aim for a Joint Venture with Sustainable Development Capital LLP (SDCL) to develop a hyperscale data centre on the former coal store site within the former Cockenzie power station site. There was expected to be at least a year's gap before moving to public consultation due to getting the legal framework in place.</p> <p>BM noted that it was never too early for engagement with local communities – particularly to ensure local communities were properly informed of the potential environmental impacts of such sites. BM noted his own professional experience with data centres and highlighted that closed-loop cooling systems were by far the standard now and, if used in the Cockenzie setting this would enable further potential benefits such as local, or wider, heat networks and would avoid large-scale water consumption.</p> <p>PM later, upon arrival, noted that Cockenzie may not be the preferred site for the AI Growth Zone, but this was not final and did not preclude development out with the AIGZ scheme.</p> |           |
| <b>4. Minutes of previous meetings 22.10.25</b> |  |           |
|   | BM advised as we are not quorate tonight but will send the October minutes out to members for email approval.  | <b>SG</b> |
| <b>5. Matters Arising</b>                       |  |           |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Destiny Project – BM advised this would be discussed further down the agenda.</li> <li>• Standing Orders – BM advised papers had not been distributed within the two-week requirement for any changes to our Standing Orders. We will look at this in the January meeting.</li> <li>• Pennypit Development Trust – BM advised we have asked for more clarification – will also be brought up further down the agenda.</li> <li>• Amenities – SB will advise us of her amenity's proposal further down the agenda.</li> </ul>  |           |

|  |   |    |
|--|---|----|
|  | Everything can be discussed tonight but no decisions can be taken till the January 2026 meeting when hopefully we will be quorate.  |    |
| <b>6. Conflict of Interest Register Update</b> |   |    |
|  | BM thanked EB/SG for pulling this register together. The list was circulated tonight and discussed, updated, and Members were asked to advise us of any changes as they arise. NG updated he sits on the Preston Lodge Learning Foundation.   | SG |
| <b>7. Standing orders update</b>               |   |    |
|  | BM advised this has been discussed previously and would like to propose a change to the Standing Orders to reduce the Elected Members from 4 votes down to 2. If in the future all Elected Members wished to attend their voting rights could be updated. BM also highlighted a change to show that each Subgroup Chair has a vote which has been our practice, but not in our Standing Orders. BM highlighted we cannot vote on this tonight and will take this to the January meeting.  |    |
| <b>8. Funding</b>                              |   |    |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>Update ELC Arts Service – ring fenced funding from round 1</b><br/>           EB gave an update from ELC Arts Service, and they have managed to relocate to Port Seton due to delays on building works at the Auld Kirk. Charlotte updated there could be £880 unspent however they could easily use this to engage some more bands, use it for promotional material or extend holiday sessions. BM added this has a direct impact on the application from Pennypit Development Trust below which was part funded at previous meeting.         </li> <li> <b>Update from Pennypit Community Development Trust on Festive Funding</b><br/>           EB updated members on the response from the Pennypit Trust. Members had asked BW/JS at the previous meeting to clarify the funding obtained across the 3 Partnerships. Ruths email highlighted additional funding £1,000 from Siemens and £1,000 form a donation. Unfortunately, the online fundraiser had currently only raised £1,000 of the £3,000 in the original application. BM highlighted whilst this information was helpful it did not provide members with the update they had requested.<br/>           BM suggested three options: -           <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arts Service retains all the funding ringfenced.</li> <li>Arts service returns £880 and the remainder of the Pennypit Trust application is awarded.</li> <li>Arts Service returns £880, and Members reallocate this funding in January's meeting.</li> </ol>           Until we receive confirmation from the Pennypit Trust around the total amount they have raised and any gaps we cannot decide. Members to be aware an email vote will be required urgently.         </li> <li> <b>Destiny project</b><br/>           EB advised following from the last meeting we wrote to Destiny Project to follow up. We did get a reply that they are keen to have a meeting and GH replied to ask if they have actioned the points that were raised in her previous         </li> </ul> |    |

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
|   | <p>email. GH reiterated they were happy to meet but has had no further response.</p> <p>BM clarified the decision was taken not to fund them at present but to build a working relationship so an application could be considered in the future. We offered support and they had contacted PSG Youth with Andrew having a conversation with Audrey.</p>  |  |
| <b>9. East Lothian Partnership LOIP</b> |  |  |
|   | <p>EB updated that due to staff circumstances an extension on the publication of the new LOIP has been agreed to February 2026. The two priorities of Keeping Safe and Money Matters have draft actions and officers are attending the community safety group tomorrow. The last theme Living Well is being led by the NHS Partnership &amp; Place Team.</p>   |  |
| <b>10. Reports from Subgroups</b>       |  |  |
|   | <p><b>Sustainable PSG</b></p> <p>BM advised the meeting did not take place due to papers not being distributed on time. BM apologised and advised he is now stepping down as being Chair. If anyone is interested in the position, please speak to us. BM advised they have been engaging with the Youth Forum thanks to JI and the bus service changes to Tranent is an issue they feel very strongly about. This was a very useful exercise and will continue to be used going forward.</p> <p>EB highlighted that following on from the successful event in PSG on Coastal Erosion and Climate Adaptation, East Lothian Climate Hub, will be hosting an East Lothian Wide event on 24<sup>th</sup> January 10am -3pm at Prestonpans Community Centre on Building Sustainable Action in East Lothian;<br/> <a href="https://www.tickettailor.com/events/eastlothianclimatehub1/1905094">https://www.tickettailor.com/events/eastlothianclimatehub1/1905094</a>. We would encourage members to attend.</p> <p>BM added that Prestonpans is the second most threatened Climate Vulnerable Community in Scotland detailed in the recent dynamic coast climate vulnerability report.</p> <p>EB added that under the Keeping Safe theme the extension of resilience plans to consider Climate vulnerability in deprived communities will be an action.</p> <p><b>Heritage</b><br/> <i>JI provided the following update: -</i><br/> Heritage Connections met 26<sup>th</sup> November.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spoke about creating a joint learning offer Prestongrange and Battlefield Trust during end of school term, exploring Inchcape fund for bus costs for local schools to take part.</li> <li>• Work ongoing with Battlefield Trust looking at murals train in PSG area as anniversary coming up.</li> <li>• Next year celebration of declaration of independence, hoping to link in with Seton Sands and Visit East Lothian to raise profile of local heritage activity coming up.</li> <li>• Looking to reengage schools later in the year regarding lessons created with first school focusing on Blindwells.</li> </ul> <p><b>Health &amp; Wellbeing</b></p> |  |

|                                    |   |  |
|------------------------------------|---|--|
|                                    | <p>SB advised they had their meeting yesterday and had a session with VCEL on the locator app. This is open to everyone/group/organisation all across East Lothian. It has been running a wee while now but still a lot of people do not know about it. CA added she has a presentation that she is happy to come along to a meeting and show everyone. BM asked if CA is happy to present at the January 2026 meeting.</p> <p><b>Children &amp; Youth Network</b><br/> <i>The update below was sent prior to the meeting from GH.</i><br/> C&amp;Y Network next meeting is the 20<sup>th</sup> of January at 4:00<br/> <b><i>‘Ensure young people have sustainable safe spaces to meet and develop.’</i></b><br/> We have been exploring what it means for C&amp;YP to feel safe in their community and what service are.</p> <p>Looking at a list of youth clubs, church groups, school clubs and scout and guiding opportunities.</p> <p>Had an presentation from Kooth who are offer Free and Anonymous mental health support. <a href="http://www.kooth.com">www.kooth.com</a></p> |  |
| <b>11. A.O.C.B.</b>                |   |  |
|                                    | <p><b>Amenities Boat Shore</b> – This is a well-used and loved area however it is needing support for planting and painting of current boats. There was a request to use the Amenities Budget for this project to use labour. Any materials would need to be sought elsewhere. BM requested that SD/SB send in photos and a clear list of the works required including any costs of materials for the January 2026 meeting.</p> <p>BM shared the dates for the 2026 meetings and OS advised 6<sup>th</sup> May 2026 is the day before main elections and the halls/centre would be used for voting so not available. Following the meeting an alternative date of 29<sup>th</sup> April 2026 was booked with Prestonpans Community Centre.</p>  |  |
| <b>12. Proposed Dates for 2026</b> |   |  |
|                                    | <b>14th Jan, 11th March, 29<sup>th</sup> April APM, 17th June, 9th September, 4th November</b>  | <p><b>Apologies to be sent to</b><br/> - <u>psg-</u><br/> <u>ap@eastlothian.gov.uk</u></p> |