

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting
held at Utterby Village Hall Wednesday 8th May 2024**

There were 17 people who attended the meeting including residents, Councillors, speakers and the Parish Council Clerk.

Apologies were received from Cllr A Hall (LCC) and Mr T Hawkins (Utterby Primary Academy).

1. Chairman's introduction

Cllr Matthew Wright, Chair of Utterby Parish Council welcomed everyone in person to the Annual Parish Meeting.

2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 5th April 2023

The draft minutes of the 2023 meeting were proposed and seconded as a true and accurate record and the Chairman signed them as the minutes.

3. Annual Report, Utterby Parish Council

Chair of Utterby Parish Council, Cllr Matthew Wright presented the Parish Council's Annual Report 2023-24

Parish Council

I am delighted to welcome you to our Annual Parish Meeting. Following the co-option of two Councillors in April we had a full council, but last week received two further resignations and so hope to fill these at a forthcoming meeting. I would like to thank the councillors for all that they do in their role.

The Parish Council has been ably supported throughout the year by our local representative from ELDC, Councillor Edward Mossop and Councillor Alex Hall from Lincolnshire County Council, who have attended most of our meetings.

On behalf of everyone residing in Utterby, I would wish to thank our Parish Clerk, Maria Vincent for her work in the running of our affairs.

Utterby Parish Council met on ten occasions this year, although on one occasion we were not quorate and therefore unable to discuss any business. We continue to meet on the first Wednesday of each month with a 15 minute slot at the beginning of the meeting for residents to ask relevant questions. Our next Parish Council meeting is tonight, at 7pm, later that it would usually be due to the elections of the Crime and Police Commission last week.

Governance

The Parish Council is a member of the Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils, their support and legal advice access has been very helpful in the past. The Council continues to ensure that its framework of policies is regularly reviewed and updated. Key documents include the Code of Conduct, Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Risk Management/ Strategy. A complete list of the policies and documents are available on the Council's website.

Delivery of Parish Council Amenities

The Council continues to maintain the Village Green and the amenity grass verges on the A16. The verges amenity grass cutting is part of a Parish Agreement with Lincolnshire County Council and we now sign up to this on a rolling basis. The initiative enables the Parish Council to contract a grass cutting company direct to cut verges along the A16 through Utterby. It has to be said that last year we were very disappointed with the contractors (used for a couple of years previously) and the grass was only cut on 5 occasions instead of the 13 times during the year they were contracted for. This year we have new contractors and hope that the grass cutting will be an improvement.

The moles have again been troublesome this year, but the pest control company endeavours to

Annual Parish Meeting 2024

keep them under control.

The bus shelters and the telephone box are cleaned every month and the structures are maintained. One of the residents of Grange Lane has painted the exterior of the telephone box and is currently painting the interior, we are most grateful to them.

The Kissing Gates on the A16 have partially collapsed and so we are currently looking into the best way to mend them. The Millennium bench and the benches on the village green are due to be re-oiled during the coming year.

The bus shelters were repainted the previous year but will be monitored. There are five planters in the village which are refreshed with new seasonal plants on a regular basis.

We maintain all the trees and the hedge on the village green, and also organise three cuts per year for the footpath from Church Lane to the A16 to keep this clear for walkers (LCC no longer maintains it). We now also cut, three times a year, the excess tree/bush growth on the corner of the A16 and Church Lane junction as this creates a blind spot when trying to pull out of Church Lane onto the main road.

Last year we were offered a free metal noticeboard from Blackrow Group (a local resident connection), and as the wooden one was in a poor state, we decided to replace it. Part of the new noticeboard is available for the users of the Village Hall to add their own posters.

Last year we contributed toward the cost of a Christmas Tree outside the Village Hall but we hope to also add some other festive decorations this year.

The Welcome Packs continue to be delivered to new residents. The Council continues to maintain and update its website, Facebook page and publishes and distributes the Utterby Voice twice a year in January and July.

Finance

In 2023/24 the precept was £8843.84. Our budget was £9,970.00 and at the end of this financial year our spend was £6969.86. Our income was £14.87 less than expected. This left us with a balance of budget and reserves of £20,030.02. The underspend this year was primarily due to the lack of grass cutting and the terrible rainy weather which stopped us from planting some new trees. We also received income from the Parish Share (grass cutting contribution from LCC) and a claim back of VAT on our expenditure. The Council resolved to make no increase on the Precept for 2024/25 keeping it to £8843.84 yet again.

We ensure that all contracts and purchases give the residents of Utterby best value. The annual Internal Audit took place in April 2024 with a good report back and the AGAR (annual governance and accountability return for 23/24) will be completed at the Annual Parish Council Meeting (later this evening) and submitted to PKF Littlejohn LLP Auditors.

LCC Highways and Other Issues

The Parish Council reports on issues regarding the highways / street lighting and the traffic refuge in the village often using 'Fix My Street' and we continue to make Lincolnshire County Council aware of the speed and volume of traffic on the A16. We are very pleased that the county council have consulted on reducing the speed limit through the main part of the village to 30mph. We will continue to petition them regarding speeding in the village as it is one of the major issues.

Planning Matters

Six applications were considered during the year:

Outline erection of 2no. dwellings with existing outbuildings to be demolished. SOUTH GRANGE, MAIN ROAD, UTTERBY, LOUTH, LN11 0TQ

Ref. No: N/192/00095/24

Planning Permission - Erection of freestanding pergola's (works started).

LANGDALE, CHURCH LANE, UTTERBY, LOUTH, LN11 0TH

Ref. No: N/192/02430/23

Hybrid application for the outline erection of 2 no. dwellings and full planning permission

Annual Parish Meeting 2024

LAND TO THE SOUTH OF GRANGE LANE, UTTERBY

Ref. No: N/192/02010/23

Section 73 application in relation to condition no. 2 (approved plans) as previously imposed
UTTERBY METHODIST CHURCH, CHAPEL LANE, UTTERBY, LOUTH, LN11 OTR

Ref. No: N/192/01575/23

Planning Permission - Extension to existing dwelling to provide additional living accommodation
HONEYSUCKLE COTTAGE, MAIN ROAD, UTTERBY, LOUTH, LN11 OTP

Ref. No: N/192/01118/23

Planning Permission - Erection of a greenhouse (works already commenced).

LANGDALE, CHURCH LANE, UTTERBY, LOUTH, LN11 OTH

Ref. No: N/192/00966/23

The Council considers all planning applications objectively and with regards to the village as a whole - it has been supportive of residents inconvenienced by building traffic and will continue to report to Planning Enforcement when conditions stipulated by planning applications are ignored or planning permission is not applied for to begin with.

4. Reports from Village Organisations

a. Utterby Primary Academy – Headteacher’s Report – Read by the Parish Council Clerk

Utterby Primary Academy is federated with North Thoresby Primary Academy, with whom we share a number of resources and staff. We are part of Academies Enterprise Trust (AET) one of the largest multi-academy trusts in England.

At Utterby we operate 3 classrooms and the Pupil Admission Number (PAN) remains at 10 children per year, a total of 70 pupils overall. We currently have 71 pupils on roll and are full in most year groups. To manage the capacity we currently have 3 full time teachers, supported part time by a number of teaching assistants. We will again take in a full cohort of 10 children in September to keep us full.

As in recent previous years, the catchment area for pupils remains remarkably wide and for about 60% of our pupils Utterby is not their nearest school. We continue to have a strong uptake of pupils attending from Louth and other surrounding villages, which is essential for the long term success of the school

It is wonderful to be part of a forward thinking and supportive trust such as Academies Enterprise Trust. Whilst we are geographically remote from our fellow trust school (as are other schools in general given our slightly unique location), we still feel very much part of the academy trust family, and this is none more so reflected in the support we receive from our colleagues up and down the country on a day to day basis.

Coming up over the summer term all the classes are going on at least one other school trip. Already our youngest children in Donaldson Class enjoyed a visit to Woodside Wildlife Centre to learn about animals from various continents. The children were well-behaved and had a fantastic day. Children in Year 5 and 6 will have the incredible opportunity for a 2 night residential in July and a one night experience is planned for children in Year 3 and 4.

In school we have been inviting our families to join our pupils in their “learning share” assemblies. In March, we held a successful Learning Share open morning featuring presentations from the Donaldsons Class on animals from different continents, Kiplings Class on the Romans and their invasion of Britain, and Morpurgos Class held an art workshop. Thank you to everyone who attended. Not only is this a fantastic opportunity for pupils to recall their recent learning (and help commit it to their long term memory), but also is a fantastic oracy opportunity to speak in front of a crowd of people.

The school continues to offer a range of before and after school provision for children. We have a daily breakfast club on site and this term children have a choice of 7 after school clubs run on Mondays to Thursdays, spread across both North Thoresby and Utterby school sites. By sharing clubs across both sites we are able to offer a wider range of clubs and continue the link for pupils to collaborate over both school sites.

Our fabulously supportive Friends of Utterby Primary Academy continue to run a number of fundraising events including a recent Easter Bingo event which raised over £500, which will go towards supporting a range of school activities over the coming year and beyond.

Our Academy Council continues to thrive. The academy council as part of our governance structure which is designed to celebrate success and explore new opportunities for the school within the local area. The council is a mix of parents, staff and local community members. We recently welcomed retired local Headteacher Paul Fox and Utterby community member and Early Years expert Simon Lashbrooke-Small into the council. Simon has already organised a music experience for older pupils at the village hall and Paul's experience will be invaluable in further school improvements. One area we are looking in with the Academy Council is developing a Careers Programme for the pupils. We are committed to exposing our children to diverse careers and opportunities they may not be aware of or have a chance to interact with directly. We recently surveyed parents and are planning to create opportunities for pupils to interact with professionals from various local careers. We welcome anyone willing to share their career experiences with the children, whether this is a current role or previous one.

The pupil-led school council of pupils also continues to help bring improvements to the school through child generated ideas. The School Council prioritises fostering a sense of responsibility and ownership among students to bring positive changes within the school.

Currently with the school council we are focusing on several "easy-win" projects including -

- **Outdoor Reading Area:** The pupils of the Kipling class have expressed a desire for an outdoor reading area. Once the weather permits, we plan to implement this by creating a mobile reading box that can be taken outside to the field. To enhance this experience, we will be asking parents to donate used picnic rugs for student seating. This project fosters a love of reading and encourages pupils to take ownership of creating a comfortable reading space.
- **Organised Bookshelves:** Students have identified the need for tidier bookshelves in the hallways and entrance. We will establish a system with pupil monitors who will check the shelves regularly. However, the emphasis is not solely on the monitors to tidy. We aim to instil a sense of shared responsibility by encouraging all pupils to return books neatly after use. This collaborative approach fosters a sense of community and respect for shared resources.
- **Tidy Cloakrooms:** Similar to the bookshelf initiative, we will be addressing untidy cloakrooms. Pupil monitors will be assigned to check cloakroom organisation; however, the overall goal is to encourage all pupils to hang their belongings properly upon arrival and departure. We may also conduct a "lost and found" clean-out to remove unclaimed items, further improving cloakroom organisation. This project teaches responsibility for personal belongings and respect for shared space.

These pupil-led initiatives aim to create a more organised and enjoyable school environment. By fostering responsibility and ownership among pupils we believe these changes will be long-lasting and have a positive impact on the overall school experience. We appreciate your support in encouraging a sense of ownership and community within our school.

For Comic Relief we held a "Coins for Change" activity in school, where spare coins were brought in and we created a long line around the playground. The children enjoyed measuring the distance and the total amount collected by the classes reached an impressive £560, rising to an incredible £700 with Gift Aid.

British Science Week: During British Science Week, the school focused on the theme of time and British scientist Charles Darwin's theory of evolution. Each class researched the changes over time in a specific animal, tracing the adaptations that led to its current form.

Donaldson class actively participated in science week activities, including exploring the life cycle of a frog through a class enactment and the pupils in foundation stage learned about plants and the spring season through a visit to a local garden centre.

All pupils recently enjoyed celebrating the important local industry of farming. Pupils enjoyed a visit from local farmers as part of the Tractors to Schools Project, learning about locally grown crops and the products they are used in.

Finally attendance - Maintaining high attendance remains a top priority for all schools as every moment really does count. We were pleased to be recognised earlier this year for our attendance levels which were in the top 10% of schools nationally during the Autumn term. A fantastic achievement.

b. St Andrew's District Church Council –Lay Chairman – Mr David Frost

Regular monthly services have been held throughout the year at St Andrews church with an average attendance of 14. Occasionally we have visitors from other Parishes but on the whole those who attend Utterby church are people from the village.

The church is always open and provides a place for those looking for somewhere to experience a moment of quiet reflection as well as for visitors either tracing their family history or simply exploring the marvellous churches in the Wolds.

The cost of maintaining this fine old building continue to increase and in 2023, it rose to almost £9,000.00

We are fortunate to have a good neighbourhood team who have held a variety of events to help meet these costs and we ended the year positively, looking forward to a growing network of support from both the clergy and our own supporters.

As lay Chairman I cannot over emphasise the importance of our volunteers, the clergy and our supporters and I would also like to thank Penny and Tina for taking over as Church Wardens.

c. Utterby Village Hall Committee – Chair - Simon Lashbrooke-Small

This is a summary of Utterby Village Hall's Annual Report 2023/24.

You can find the full report and finance update on the Hall's website. <https://utterbyvillagehall.org/>

There are four main areas to report on -

1. Governance

Meeting the legal requirements of managing and running the Hall

A formal MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE is required by the Hall's Trust Deed governing document and the Charity Commission. A committee was formed in Autumn 23.

Management Committee members are designated as Management Trustees and an AGM must be held each year to formally elect and ratify them. This took place on 29 April 24.

The Committee is responsible for all aspects of running and managing the Hall.

We recognised the work and dedication of Glenda Thorndycroft and Pat Doherty, who had been running the Hall and keeping it open over the past few years. They stepped down in September.

Hall FINANCES were reported on at the AGM and they are in good order.

Once audited, financial information required by the Charity Commission, will be uploaded to their website.

2. Building & Site

Practicalities of keeping the premises maintained and safe for use

The building's ELECTRICAL SAFETY was fully checked by electricians in December.

They completed the mandatory five year Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) and carried out all follow up remedial work. This brings the electrical system up to current safety standards.

Additionally, a new heater was fitted in the coffee area in November. We plan to add another this Autumn.

The premises needed a full FIRE SAFETY RISK ASSESSMENT.

This was undertaken by a qualified assessor in January. Resulting actions from the report have been completed.

An ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT SURVEY is a requirement for buildings built before 2000.

A professional assessment was made in January.

The report and plan are available for contractors who carry out work on the building.

REPAIR, MAINTENANCE & IMPROVEMENTS are always needed.

Thanks to volunteers Dave Whitehall and Lee Smith for carrying out maintenance jobs around the Hall.

We are also developing a plan for repair, maintenance and improvement to the building.

All work and funding will need to be costed and planned for.

CLEANING & GARDENING is carried out by committee members and volunteers.

Hirers often comment that the Hall is very clean and well cared for.

We now pay a window cleaner every other month to clean external windows.

3. Policies & Procedures

Developing and implementing key policies and procedures to operate safely and effectively.

A comprehensive HALL HIRE AGREEMENT and booking forms have been created.

These are used for all hires and clearly set out terms and conditions of hire.

Village Guard HALL INSURANCE continues to be held with Allied Westminster.

This is specifically designed for village hall cover.

A written FIRE SAFETY POLICY and Fire Safety Log Book have been put in place by the new

Committee. Fire safety information is shared with all hirers before their hire begins.

We now have a COPYRIGHT MUSIC LICENSE (TheMusicLicence PPL PRS) which must be renewed and paid for annually. This allows live and recorded copyright music to be played in the Hall

No ACCIDENTS have been recorded in the past twelve months.

There have been no COMPLAINTS.

ADDITIONAL POLICIES required for operation are being developed and can be found on the website as they are agreed by the committee.

4. Bookings, Advertising & Publicity

Letting people know about Utterby Village Hall, how to hire it and what's going on

We updated HIRE CHARGES in September. Discounted rates for regular Hirers and Utterby residents were also introduced. Hire charges will not increase this year.

Ways of CONTACTING THE HALL have improved. A Facebook page, Instagram account,

X account and email address have been set up, providing more ways to contact and find out about the Hall.

Our new WEBSITE went live in February. This is now a hub for hall information.

We also continue to produce POSTERS, FLYERS & LEAFLETS and deliver information to Utterby residents.

HALL USE rose from 103 hires in 22/23 to 162 hires during 23/24.

Total hours of use rose from 238 hours to 411.5 hours.

Thank you to all our Hirers who continue to use the Hall for a wide variety of activities, especially those that hire the Hall regularly.

We also appreciate everyone who supports events and activities that take place.

This 116 year old building is still having a beneficial impact on a wide variety of people.

We will do our best to care for it during our time as Management Trustees.

Open Forum

- A resident asked if the Parish Councillors would introduce themselves as she did not know who they were. At this point all Parish Councillors present introduced themselves.
- A resident reported that the planning decision for South Grange was still being considered by ELDC.
- The Clerk read out an email from Cllr A Hall (LCC) regarding the 30mph speed limit, and that this would be implemented at the end of May and then once that is done they may reconsider the position of the current refuge. It was confirmed that the current stretch of road that is 30mph would change to 40mph.
- Cllr E Mossop (ELDC) reported that Platform Housing would be sympathetic to removing and rehousing the benches currently on the Benson Court land, should they sell or demolish the current building. It was noted that it was not only the benches that should be rehomed, but the plants and bushes.

Cllr Wright brought the meeting to a close, thanking everyone for coming to the meeting.

The meeting closed at 6.35p.m.

Minutes taken by: Maria Vincent, Utterby Parish Clerk