

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting  
held on Zoom Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2021 at 6:30pm**

There were 11 people who attended the meeting including residents, Councillors, speakers and the Parish Council Clerk.

No apologies were received.

**1. Chairman's introduction**

Cllr Alan Woodward, Chair of Utterby Parish Council welcomed everyone to the meeting. He explained that due to the Coronavirus Pandemic a Parish Meeting had not been held for two years.

**2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

The draft minutes of the 2019 meeting had been circulated prior to the meeting via email and on the website, these were proposed and seconded as a true and accurate record and agreed that the Chairman sign the minutes as soon as possible.

**3. Annual Report, Utterby Parish Council**

Chair of Utterby Parish Council, Cllr Alan Woodward presented the Parish Council's Annual Report 2020-21. See Appendix 1.

**4. Reports from Village Organisations**

**a. Utterby Primary Academy – Headteacher's Report – Tom Hawkins**

Since March 2020 we have been operating under enhanced COVID-19 restrictions and combining physical and virtual provision to educate our children.

During the first lockdown we temporarily closed the Utterby site and worked out of the North Thoresby site for children from both schools, as well as opening up for children from Fulstow and North Cotes Primary Schools. When restrictions eased later in the summer term 2020 we reopened for a month for all pupils before the summer holidays. During the Autumn Term between September and December we were fortunate enough to have no positive cases amongst either pupils or staff and as a result had very limited absences during this time, which was important to help children return to their routines and help us close some of the gaps caused by lost learning.

When National Lockdown recommenced in January we kept the Utterby site open for approximately 50% of our pupils who were still attending. The remaining 50% accessed virtual content in parallel with their peers in school.

Academies Enterprise Trust (AET) continue to be our school sponsor and have been exceptional in their support for our schools, both in terms of preparation for being open to pupils and in financial support. They have ensured we now have at least 1 laptop for every child, which has been a significant investment in our schools and helped greatly in ensuring that lost learning was kept to a minimum during the last lockdown period.

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Since March 8th we have been re-open to all pupils again and look forward to a summer term with hopefully more easing of restrictions to allow parents to come onto the site again.

Admissions and Cohort – The Pupil Admission Number (PAN) is 10 per year, with a school capacity of 70 overall. We need to aim to get 10 per year to fill up the places. Currently we have 63 on roll, which is due to stay the same in September as we expect another full year group of 10 pupils.

For about 60% of our pupils Utterby is not their nearest school and we have a strong uptake of pupils attending from Louth. Families are choosing to send their children here to enjoy our relatively small class sizes and good behaviour, and we now operate 2 minibuses to facilitate this demand.

Because of continued good numbers the school is financially very buoyant moving forward.

School Grounds – There has been in the past plans to expand and renovate the school building. We currently have 2 substantive classrooms inside the main building with a 'mobile' classroom to the side of the main building. The 'mobile' is a pleasant learning environment, and suits our current Year 5 & 6 class well, however this will be replaced with a new more permanent structure in the next 12 to 18 months to expand our learning environments and free up some playground space.

Over the Easter holidays we had some major structural work done including replacing the hall floor, replacing the front roof elevation of the main building and replacing the gable end fascias and soffits. This work was all funded centrally by our trust.

"Return to Normalcy" – As COVID restrictions ease further we will look to return more practical elements of the curriculum including school trips and having parents back on the site for assemblies and performances, etc.

Much of what happens in school now feels very normal and the children have adapted quickly. When social distancing rules get relaxed we will continue with many preventative measures such as increased ventilation and handwashing for example.

### **b. St Andrew's District Church Council –Hon. Secretary - Linda Sproston**

In 2020 things started well for St Andrew's Church. The project to refurbish the church bells was completed and the annual Snowdrop day was held in February, with record attendance. Then came the first lockdown and churches were instructed to close their doors. All planned events had to be cancelled and church services could not be held unless via the internet. All services at St James, our Deanery church in Louth, are streamed live.

During the lockdowns, the Churchwarden has rung the church bells to signal support for the weekly clap for carers, for Armistice Day and other national moments.

In September 2020 with social distancing and hygiene measures in place we could re-open for services. Numbers attending were limited and restrictions meant there could be no singing for the congregation and no socialising after the services. Nevertheless, it was heart-warming to see church members again and our small congregation has been steadfast in its support.

Services continue to be held on the fourth Sunday of each month and the church is open for private prayer each Sunday between 10.00 and 12.00am.

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The one place which was not locked down was the churchyard. This remains open to all, is well used, and much appreciated as a place of quiet beauty and remembrance. With a grant from the Wolds Countryside service a new bench seat has been obtained and repairs to fencing have been achieved. Volunteers help with many of the churchyard maintenance tasks; thank you one and all. For grass cutting and hedge trimming a professional service is necessary. This involves costs. As lockdown eases, we plan to hold an event to focus on raising the funds for churchyard maintenance and improvements.

With limited opportunity for fund raising since 2020 finances are a concern. Bills for such things as insurance and clergy costs still must be met. Service collections and generous private donations have kept us afloat. The DCC is indebted to everyone for their support. As 2021 progresses we can hope for better things. We aim to provide fund raising events but most of all we would like to see more people joining us, whether for services, for social events or for just learning about and enjoying the special building that is Utterby St Andrew's Church. Everyone is most welcome.

### c. **Village Hall Committee – Ann Van-Spall – Treasurer, Utterby Village Hall**

Like other community/voluntary organisations for the Village Hall it has been a year with no public activity in the Hall because of COVID 19 & lockdown.

These facilities, because of the nature of the activities, makes Village Halls places that are vulnerable to the spread of COVID.

However the Committee has been very busy of late. Due to the intervention of the previous Village Hall Chairman and current Chairman of the Parish Council Councillor Alan Woodward along with District Councillor Edward Mossop we secured the Restart Grants (IRSG) Local Restrictions Support Grant paid by Central Government, and we thank them for this.

The Committee have installed a French drain outside and the building which has eliminated water ingress. 20 tons of stone was purchased and our thanks go to Pat, Glenda and Kevin Committee members who carried out the work.

The Committee had agreed to a new UPVC double door for entrance to exit on the side of the building to replace the existing door.

UPVC windows have been installed along the back of the Hall with replacement glass being substituted for blown panels on the side of the building.

We have also installed a brand new state of the art kitchen together with new appliances.

Further works are programmed in including another cubicle and ladies toilet and refurbishing of new lighting and vanity unit.

Tomorrow Thursday 6th May is our first booking hosting Local Elections.

## 5. **Open Forum**

A member of the public raised the issues of speeding and air pollution on the A16 and asked if the Parish Council were aware if any measurements had been taken as to the level of pollution on the main road. Cllr Alan Woodward confirmed that he was not aware that any testing had been undertaken and would ask that the subject be added onto a future Parish Council agenda. Cllr Woodward also confirmed that the Parish Council often requested that Lincolnshire County Council consider a speed reduction on the A16 but that we did not currently fall into the required criteria, but that we would keep requesting this.

The meeting closed at 6.55 p.m.

Minutes taken by: Maria Vincent, Utterby Parish Clerk

**Utterby Parish Council Annual Report May 2020 to May 2021**

This is the first opportunity to deliver our Annual Report for two years due to the exceptional circumstances that we have all been living through.

**Parish Council**

In May 2019, for the first time in many years, an election was successfully held to appoint seven Utterby Parish Councillors. However in Autumn 2020 Ann Van Spall and Glenda Thorndycroft resigned leaving two vacancies. I wish to thank both of them for their contributions to Utterby Parish Council. I am delighted to report that we were able to quickly co-opt Matthew Wright and Nicola Gallant to bring our Council back to a full compliment and I feel that Utterby has a strong Parish Council. I would like to thank all Councillors for their support and work over the past twelve months, a year which has been an incredibly difficult time for everyone.

In addition, the Parish Council has been ably supported by our local representative from ELDC, Councillor Edward Mossop who has attended almost all of our meetings.

**Parish Clerk**

On behalf of everyone residing in Utterby I would wish to thank our Parish Clerk, Maria Vincent for her excellent work. She brings expertise, thoroughness and enthusiasm to the Council and her contribution is vital to the smooth running of our affairs.

During these difficult times we have managed to hold our monthly meetings electronically through Zoom whilst some other Lincolnshire parishes did not meet for some time as a Council in the first half of the year. Utterby Parish Council continues to meet on the first Wednesday of each month and offers a 5 minute slot for public participation whilst on Zoom, 15 minutes when we get to meet again face to face.

**Governance**

The Parish Council is a member of the Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils, benefiting from their training programme and legal advice access. It 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 website.

**Delivery of Parish Council Amenities**

The Council continues to maintain the Village Green and the amenity grass verges on the A16. The verges are a part of the Parish Agreement with Lincolnshire County Council and 2020/21 was the second year that we had signed up to this contracting 13 cuts for the year.

We maintain the trees on the village green, its trees and its hedge, and now organise three cuts per year for the footpath from Church Lane to the A16 to keep this clear for walkers as LCC no longer maintain it and this year we have also planted many more daffodils on the verges adjacent to the A16. We are grateful to the ELDC Tree Officer for the help and advice he has given us over the past year.

The Parish Council is committed to improving the fabric of our village. In 2019 we purchased planters for the end of our four lanes and in 2020/21 we replanted them twice in spring and autumn. Having found that walking in the village increased during lockdown in 2020 we purchased two teak benches in January and sited them on the Village Green. The Kissing Gate and Millennium bench was completely refurbished in February/March 21. We have now taken delivery of litter picking equipment so that any local volunteers can also join in with keeping the village tidy. Hopefully we will be able to continue with similar initiatives in the future.

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

### **Finance**

In 2020/21 the precept was £8843.84 but due to the covid pandemic some of the projects we hoped to fund out of the precept could not go ahead and so at the end of this financial year our spend was £7,088.23, leaving a balance of budget and reserves of £ 14009.66. During the year the Council resolved to make no increase on the Precept for 2021/22 keeping it to £8843.84.

We ensure that all contracts and purchases give the residents of Utterby best value. An Internal Audit took place in March 2021 and the AGAR (annual governance and accountability return for 20/21) will be completed at the Annual Parish Council Meeting and submitted to PKF Littlejohn LLP Auditors.

### **LCC Highways and Other Issues**

The Parish Council continues to report on the state of the roads and the traffic refuge in the village and we continue to make Lincolnshire County Council aware of the speed and volume of traffic on the A16 and will keep doing so as one of the major issues in the village. We ask that mobile speed units continue to be deployed in the village and we report to the County Council on the current mounted speed signs which only work intermittently.

### **Planning Matters**

Four planning applications were considered during the year.

1. LAND OFF CHAPEL LANE, CHAPEL LANE, UTTERBY
2. DUNHAM, CHURCH LANE, UTTERBY, LOUTH, LINCOLNSHIRE, LN11 0TH
3. UTTERBY METHODIST CHURCH, CHAPEL LANE, UTTERBY, LOUTH, LINCOLNSHIRE, LN11 0TR
4. TEMPLETON, MAIN ROAD, UTTERBY, LOUTH, LN11 0TP

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 Building Enforcement when conditions stipulated by planning applications are ignored or planning permission is not applied for to begin with.