

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING FOR LITTLE ELLINGHAM
held on Thursday 26th May 2022 at 6.45pm at Old School Hall

Present: Peter Griffiths, Stuart Knight and Alex Fitzgerald

In attendance: Melanie Eversfield (Clerk), and 3 members of the public.

1. Welcome and introduction

Councillor Peter Griffiths, Chairman, welcomed everybody to the Parish Meeting.

2. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 5th May 2021.

The minutes, having previously been circulated, were agreed and signed as a true record.

3. Matters Arising

There were none.

4. Chairman's Annual Report

The Chairman, Councillor Peter Griffiths, gave a report on the activities of Parish Council over the past year. This report is attached to the official minutes. (Appendix 1)

5. District Councillor's Report

The District Councillor, Sarah Suggitt, was not present but sent a written report. This is attached to the official minutes.

6. County Councillor's Report

County Councillor, Ed Connolly, was not present but sent a written report. This is attached to the official minutes.

7. Reports from Village Organisations

Friends of St Peter's – Peter Griffiths read a report on the activities of the Friends of St. Peter's over the past year. This is attached to the official minutes. (Appendix 2).

St. Peter's Church: Peter Griffiths read a report on the activities of the PCC. This is attached to the official minutes. (Appendix 3).

8. Items from Parishioners

There were none.

9. The meeting closed at 7.00pm.

Appendix 1

Little Ellingham Parish Council – Annual Report 2021-22

The first meeting of the year, in May, took place by Zoom, as had all the meetings in 2020-21, but from July onwards, as the Covid pandemic began to recede and after the enabling legislation had expired, meetings returned to being in person.

Overall, 2021-22 has been a relatively quiet year for the council, but the following issues are worthy of note:

- The council agreed to the construction of a village gateway on the Attleborough Road, transferred funds to Norfolk County Council so that the work could be put in hand, but await notification as to when this will happen
- After flooding at Christmas 2020 caused by a blocked drain taking stormwater from Church Avenue, Church Lane, and part of Attleborough Road, the council has had regular contact with Norfolk Highways to discuss how a recurrence can be avoided. Initially, it was thought that linking the two stormwater drains in Church Road would alleviate the problem, but this has proved not to be technically possible. It seems therefore that the only solution is for the blockage to be removed, and this is the responsibility of the landowners whose property the drain crosses. So far, the two landowners involved have denied any responsibility, but this is a matter for the County Council to resolve, and we hope that Ed Connelly will encourage officers to apply pressure so that any risk of further flooding is removed
- During the year, the Kerry Foods business at Rookery Farm was acquired by Pilgrim Foods. The community liaison scheme remains in place, and there is regular contact between the council and Pilgrim Foods, especially when there are complaints about odour, noise, light pollution, breaches of the weight limit, litter etc.
- Gressingham Foods disposed of their site in Wood Lane, and the new owner is in the midst of implementing an extant planning consent for two new poultry sheds
- A band of newly recruited volunteers has breathed new life into the village hall, putting on community events, encouraging more bookings and generally raising its profile. Particular thanks are due to Mel Little, Sheila Hassock, Linda Bell and Sarah Drewery. The council has also overseen a programme of repairs, correcting a number of defects dating from when the hall was built, in particular preventing dampness and ingress of water
- Acquisition of a defibrillator, fixed to the front wall of the village hall, and provision of training in its use and in CPR
- As regards general administration, the council has approved a number of revised policies, including those covering the Code of Conduct and Financial Regulations.

As ever, as chairman, I've been grateful for the support of fellow councillors, notably Stuart for taking a lead on many matters affecting the village hall, but also the defibrillator and CPR training. And to Alex for keeping a close eye on the finances, for developing a net revenue expenditure calculation and for coordinating matters relating to this year's jubilee. Thanks also are due to Melanie for keeping us in order at all times.

Appendix 2

Friends of St Peter's – report to Annual Parish Council meeting 2022

Due to Covid related lockdowns and other issues, the Friends were inactive during 2021, as was the case in 2020.

The intention is to hold an extraordinary general meeting in the coming months at which the future of the Friends can be discussed and decided.

Peter Griffiths - Hon Treasurer

Appendix 3

Report for the Little Ellingham Parish Council 2022

As part of the Shellrock Benefice, the church of St Peter continues to provide two regular monthly services to the community of Little Ellingham:

A service of Holy Communion at 10.30am on the Second Sunday

A service of Prayer and Praise at 6.30pm on the third Sunday

We also hold services for some of the special times in the church calendar such as Harvest and Christmas and we look forward to a special Thanksgiving service for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth 2nd on her Jubilee celebration week-end.

We currently have one part-time priest, Revd Prebendary Sue Strutt, Priest Associate and one Lay Minister, Colin Thomas. The Priest-in-charge, Revd Christina Mason has retired so we are technically in Interregnum. The current Parochial Church Council (PCC) comprises six people, including the ministers. Our church warden is Margaret Thomas.

Since the pandemic started we have sadly lost four members of our PCC and congregation; Elizabeth Griffiths, Maurice Briggs, Peggy Thomas and Ann Nash.

The churchyard is still open for burials. It is maintained by a band of volunteers for which we are very grateful.

Our Kitchen Project (Tea-Point) is finally finished complete with mains water and sewage. This gives us an excellent facility to provide refreshments and storage in the church.

Our power line was taken down by a tree blown over in the recent gale. Thankfully minimal damage was done to the church and UK power made the broken cable safe very quickly and restored power a few days later.

We currently have no major works planned, we are simply consolidating what we already have.

We continue to support the local Foodbank and did so throughout the pandemic. Donations are usually sent to Thetford which is the main distributor for our area. On those occasions when Thetford has been unable to take donations, we have also supported the Norwich Foodbank, The Salvation Army and the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital.

Changes are being planned by the Diocese and discussions are taking place for our benefice to merge with the neighbouring benefice of Hingham and High Oaks. If this goes ahead, then the benefice will consist of twelve parishes and churches. There is still a long way to go before the details of this merger are finalised and, with the methodical way the Church of England operates, little progress is expected soon. We hope to have a new Priest-in-charge by the end of the year but even this is not guaranteed.

Like everyone else, the Covid-19 Pandemic has severely disrupted our services and our finances. However we remain positive and look forward to a year of normality, whatever that has in store for us, and an opportunity to develop our worship and service to the wider community. We are always grateful for all the support we get from people in whatever capacity. Thank you.

Colin Thomas, acting Secretary.