

Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held at Englefield Village Hall on Thursday 19th May 2022

Present:

Cllr E. Crookes (Chairman)
Cllr M. Postles
Cllr R. Smith
Cllr L. Dennison

In attendance:

N. Rands (Clerk)
Cllr Ross Mackinnon
Glen Higgins
Yvonne Redgrave

Also present: Four members of the public

1. Welcome by Chairman of Englefield Parish Council

Apologies were received from Catherine and Peter Haig

2. Minutes

Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on 28th April 2021 were approved and signed as a true record

3. Chairman's Report

Cllr Crookes gave a report summarising key activities of the Parish Council during 2021/22, covering the following main points:

- The Council met on five occasions, all, with the exception of one, being in the Village Hall
- Received and considered 22 planning applications
- Supported the new Village Hall
- The Council extends its thanks to the committee organising The Queen's Platinum Jubilee community event
- The Chairman thanked – the Parish Clerk; fellow Councillors; those attending the meetings
- Thanks were given to Nick Wynne Jones following his resignation as Councillor after 8 years.

4. Clerk's Report

Nia Rands gave a report on the activities and business of the Parish Clerk during 2021/22

5. Five-a-Day Market Garden

Glen Higgins & Yvonne Redgrave provided an update on the previous year, covering the following main points:

- Impact of Covid on meetings and limit on numbers able to meet
- Good level of volunteers since the garden has been able to re-open
- Crops grown to raise income – fresh vegetables sold in gazebo in garden centre car park
- Successful Christmas wreath-making workshops run in late 2021
- Late 2021 onwards – return of corporate groups
- Focussed on replacing raised beds; installing rabbit-proof fencing; pergola roof

- Thyme Together – one of the first groups back, able to continue meeting in Village Hall through winter
- Visits by urban schools sponsored by Ella's Kitchen
- Uniform groups recently resumed meeting in the garden
- Working with Social Prescribers locally
- Toilet facilities required to replace access to toilet facilities in garden centre
 - Applied for planning permission in February 2022
 - Fund-raising needed
- Future plans – replace rotten shed; keep on top of weeds; pergola
- Thanks given to Englefield Estate and Englefield Garden Centre for support; Dudley Fishburn (mowing); volunteers

6. Englefield Village Hall

Lynn Dennison provided an update on the previous year, covering the following main points:

- Momentous first year – Registered and established new charity and granted lease for hall
- Recruited Trustees and volunteers
- Set-up governance and operational processes from scratch – finance, bank accounts, insurance, website, cleaning, social media, etc.
- Grappled with Covid restrictions and impact on hall hire
- Hires and events for local community – Andy & Laura's leaving party; Englefield Flower Show; weekly coffee mornings; Englefield Primary School; nursery; Jubilee community event

7. Englefield Estate Update

Estate Director, Edward Crookes, provided an update on the activities of the Englefield Estate during 2021/22, covering the following main points:

- Emerging from Covid – operational and economic impact
- Priorities:
- Post-Brexit rural policy, e.g. farming, forestry
- Climate change
- Nature recovery and biodiversity
- Ensuring the Estate remains viable, but “nature positive” – shift focus of home farms from production to regenerative farming
- Effects of Ukraine war
- Upcoming activities within the parish – refurbishment of village shop and tea rooms; car park; Estate Yard; Cobbs Farm Shop car park extension; summer concerts

8. District Councillor

Cllr Ross MacKinnon gave a report on the activities of West Berkshire Council during 2021/22, covering the following main points:

- Support of vulnerable residents and businesses during Covid-19 pandemic - >£40m given to local businesses
- Support of Afghanistan refugees
- Household Support Fund – distribute funding from central Government to those suffering financially, extended during current cost of living crisis
- Rough sleepers in West Berkshire reduced to zero
- Impact on storms in February 2022
- Ukrainian refugee support

- Joint lowest Council Tax rise in England

9. Thames Valley Police

Sergeant Lond provided a written report of the activities during 2021/22

10. Open Public Forum

DRAFT - AWAITING APPROVAL