

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF STOKE POGES

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING AND PARISH MEETING

Held at 12.30pm on 29th May 2023 at St Andrew's Church, Stoke Poges

Present: John Wheatley (Chair), Simon McDowell and Julie Cawood

Congregation: approximately 30 including above

1. **Opening of the meeting**

John Wheatley (JW) welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained he was going to be Chairman in Natasha's absence. He followed this with a prayer. Reports had been made available through the Church Blog and paper copies had been available both in the churches and from the Church Office.

2. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Rev. Natasha Brady, Kate Holliday, Ruth Rooley, Mark Wells, Ann Sibley

3. **Presentation of Electoral Roll**

JW advised that there were 95 on the Electoral Roll, reduced by one from last year, as published for the two Sundays before the APCM.

4. **Appointment of Church Wardens**

The APCM paused and Simon McDowell (SM) welcomed people to a separate meeting, the **Parish Meeting**, in which he cordially invited John Wheatley to continue as Churchwarden in his fifth year of service. SM also explained that he was stepping down as churchwarden after the six year term, although he was remaining as PCC Secretary, and Julie Cawood agreed to be proposed for election by SM as his replacement.

There being no objections from those present, John and Julie were duly appointed and **the Parish Meeting ended.**

5. **Treasurer's Report**

John Wheatley (JW) gave the report covering the year from January to December 2022. His report took some of the highlights of the Church Accounts, which can be found separately to these minutes. The main points were as follows:

- We saw a good recovery in our income, and continued to meet our commitments, notably our Parish Share, our biggest commitment at £63,000.
- Mission Giving continued to SHOC and NLT – giving £1600 to each.
- Maintained 3 months operating costs in our accounts
- Planned giving and collections are about 1/3 of our income, followed by rental of the flats and lettings of the St Andrew's halls
- Total General Fund income £140,000 and general fund expenditure was £112,000. A breakdown of which can be found in the Annual Report.
- We made a surplus of £26,000 on the general fund, however due to spending on the restricted funds, including depreciation, there was a resultant deficit of £34,000.
- Much of our funds are in restricted funds, which were detailed to the meeting.

Further details are available on the Annual Report

6. Report on the fabric, goods and ornaments of the Church

Richard Beckingsale (RB) highlighted the work done on both churches during 2022, which started again as restrictions were lifted.

- Focus on the new flats to be built above St Andrew's – tenders were received at the end of the year and the project was uneconomic, so we are considering alternatives.
- Discussions continue on how best to address the leaky roofs at St Andrew's.
- New printer in the office and water boiler for the kitchen at St Andrew's were bought.
- The maintenance of equipment at both church buildings was undertaken: this included the fire extinguishers, the PAT testing of all electrical equipment, and our lightning conductor at St. Andrew's.
- Car parking at St Andrew's has been brought under control, thanks to Natasha's negotiating skills.
- The Organ at St. Giles' is regularly retuned and the main boiler there has been de-scaled to improve performance.

7. Report on the proceedings of the Deanery Synod

JW outlined the Deanery Synod proceedings for the year, covering the 4 meetings plus a special Treasurer's meeting. Items discussed and actions taken were:

- Discussion about moving forward with Digital Church, to reach out to a larger church family at home.
- Plans for a new community café and Hub and initiative to reach out to school in the area with Wayne Dixon.
- Agreement for Parish Share and outreach.
- Presentation from Rev Polly Faulkener on the topic of unconscious bias and also discussed was Christians Against Poverty (CAP) which is needing to come up with new ways of financing its work.

8. Election of members to the Deanery Synod

We have 2 members: John Wheatley and Mark Wells. They were happy to stand once again for election and were duly elected to continue as our Deanery Synod Representatives.

9. Appointment of PCC members and Independent Examiner for annual accounts

This now needs doing every year. Kate Holliday has decided to step down. Ian Langham was welcomed to the PCC, and has agreed to take on the role of Treasurer. All other members are happy to continue and the congregation were asked if they were happy to vote them in again – all were.

Karrie Taylor, as a member of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants was reappointed as our independent examiner.

10. Appointment of Sidespeople

Appointments were approved for Richard Beckingsale, Jamie Brady, Andrew Gardiner, Kate Holliday, Nigel Lowe, Jon Marzetti, Piers Nickson, Philip Pickering, Deb Whittaker and Mike Wright.

11. Questions for the PCC

No questions were submitted in advance.

Jon Homan asked for an update on progress with redevelopment of the site, which SM gave. The plans were put out to tender, and tenders were received at approximately the same amount. Costs have gone up to the point where pursuing this is no longer financially viable. The architect has been reinstructed to draw up plans to address the issues with the roof, and SM hopes to be able to report to the PCC shortly with the progress on this.

Jon Homan also asked about the roses on the path up to St Giles' from the lych-gate, quoting from a guidebook in 1910 which said "one of the most famous literary places after Stratford upon Avon is the churchyard at Stoke Poges, scene of Grey's Elegy and its rose-lined path". SM reported on investigations to install an irrigation system, amongst other plans, with the hope of increasing the numbers of roses. SM encouraged any additional volunteers to join the reapers to allow extra time to tend to the roses, and ways forward were discussed.

12. Wardens' comments

John Wheatley spoke of the importance of volunteers to our churches, and wished to place on record his thanks and pride in the people who help in Stoke Poges Church.

At the onset of Natasha's illness, the number of services were reduced by two per month at St Giles'. We continue, and try to follow Natasha's style. Rev'd Tim Wambunya at St Paul's, Slough has agreed to cover one Communion Service per month in Natasha's absence.

13. Meeting closed

Julie closed the meeting in prayer.

These minutes signed on:

By:
