

**B. MINUTES of the ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING** held at St Andrew's Church, on Monday, 22 April 2024.

The meeting was held at St. Andrew's Church. 38 church members attended. Papers relating to the meeting had been published on the Church Website, and paper copies made available to parishioners on request prior to the meeting.

The Rev'd. Chris Park, Associate Minister, was in the Chair and Peter Aspin attended as Secretary.

**1. Rector's Report (written by Rev'd. Ian Birkinshaw):**

The Rector's Report was read out on his behalf at the meeting. The Report reflected upon Ian's diary and his highlights month by month in his last year. The Report concluded in saying that it had been, 'a tremendous privilege to serve here, alongside Adele ... how they had loved being part of this church and thank God for the adventures shared over the past 16 years in the Parish'. He said that, whilst it was very hard to leave, the time is right as the church needs a different sort of leader for a new season.

As always, Ian's report included a full list of thanks to the people who have served the church faithfully in official and unofficial roles.

The Parish was able to say their 'thank you' to Ian and Adele at a party when gifts were offered on Saturday, 30 March 2024 and at their final service on Easter Sunday when many of us were able to say our final goodbyes. We continue to pray for Ian and Adele as they move on to enjoy their retirement.

Rev'd. Ian and Adele Birkinshaw left the role officially on 14<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

**2. Apologies for absence:**

Apologies of absence were received from fourteen parishioners.

**3. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 22 April 2023:**

Chris Clarke proposed and Andy Bevington seconded that these Minutes be accepted. This was agreed unanimously and signed as a true record by the Chair, Rev'd. Chris Park.

**4. Matters arising:**

There were no matters arising from the Minutes.

**5. Presentation of the Electoral Roll:**

The Electoral Roll Officer, Alison Walters (Parish Administrator) presented changes to the Electoral Roll since the last annual meeting. A copy of the Roll was made available for inspection at the meeting.

Alison reported that following this year's revision the Roll currently stands at 205, a decrease of 4 on the previous year. The changes that have taken place include 3 new people joining the Roll, and 7 deaths. Alison reiterated that people can join the Roll at any point through the year and not have to wait for annual renewals or revisions. She also reminded the meeting that next year would be a complete Renewal of the Roll.

## **6. Annual Report and Accounts 2023:**

### **6.1 Presentation of Annual Audited Accounts for the year ending 31 December 2023**

Andrew Coombes, Parish Treasurer, presented the financial statements reviewing the past year and linking financial plans for the future. He began thanking all those who handle cash flow and do the cash counts on a weekly basis. In particular, he expressed his thanks to Andrew Bevington, Assistant Treasurer, who in particular manages the staff payroll and Jackie Blanshard, who manages and banks money weekly.

The presentation was delivered using a number of slides covering three sections: a) 2023 Results; b) 2024 and Beyond; and c) Summary.

#### **a) 2023 Results**

In summary, we had a 'sound year overall', with income higher and expenditure lower than expected.

Financially the Parish ended up with a surplus of approx. £12,339 which reflects 2.4 weeks of costs required to run the Church. The Reserves of £93,400 remained unchanged as we have not had to dip into this during 2023.

As last year, the Treasurer was keen to point out that as a result of all the Mission and activity outlined in the other APCM reports produced for this meeting, we should celebrate 2023, embrace 2024 but consider carefully how we are going to sustain this in 2025. Overall, we were in a good position. Specific Funds (Restricted) are in good order, Expenditure is currently under control, and Reserves in a good place. However, as reported in previous years, our key area for action remains the need to address how we might increase Income to enable us to be in a more robust Sustainable position.

#### **b) 2024 and beyond**

Looking forward, the Treasurer suggested key themes that will present challenges to us:

- Our Regular Giving – remains steady but is not matching inflation and, therefore, will need to increase markedly over the next few years. However, we may need to look at other sources of income e.g. legacies.
- Securing income - from new groups and/or sources will help;
- Expenditure – costs appear more stable, the real living wage for 2025 will be lower. Energy costs still a mystery.
- Balancing support - from reserves / long term financial security versus sustaining our mission to enable growth.

### **2024 Budget**

The Treasurer displayed a chart showing the Income and Expenditure breakdown for the Parish. Once again, he emphasised that of the approx. £250,000/year income received, £150,000 comes from Regular Giving (plus Gift Day, Gift Aid) and that this is the foundation we need in order to sustain the mission and activity of the church. Challenges include increasing income by 6%, reducing 'support' from our Reserves and building up our regular giver numbers. Expenditure wise we matched the Living Wage increase 10%, and met increased energy costs.

### **c) Summary**

- We are blessed with generous giving.
- We need do some 'special' things to grow our income to enable us to sustain our Mission.
- The effect of high inflation has resulted in a £20,000 gap in our finances.
- We need to maintain our fundraising for the Outreach project.

The Treasurer concluded his report by stating that we are in a good, overall position and can maintain our mission for a couple of years. However, the continuing theme remains that we have to capture some extra income and grow our giving.

Heather Wraight asked what impact the vacancies might have on the finances. Andrew responded saying that whilst we would save some cost on the Youth Leader post, none is saved for the Rector Vacancy as we continue to give to the Diocese.

No further questions were raised. The Chair offered his thanks to the Treasurer for his clear presentation of our financial situation. He expressed his grateful thanks to him and his team as they lead on the day by day management of our finances, and help us understand the needs and actions therein.

The proposal was therefore made to accept the Finance Report as presented: Proposed by Ben Griffiths, Seconded Ruth Brooks and unanimously agreed.

## **6.2 Appointment of Independent Examiner:**

In recording our grateful thanks to the current Independent Examiner, Rachel Hillman, the Treasurer confirmed that she was willing to continue in this role. It was therefore proposed by Andrew Coombes, Seconded Janet Stephen, that she be re-appointed. Agreed unanimously.

## **6.3 Annual Report & Accounts for the PCC including our mission activities for the year ended 31 December 2021:**

The Chair advised the meeting that the Annual Report & Accounts was presented and adopted by the PCC at its last meeting in March prior to the APCM.

The Independent Examiner, Rachel Hillman, signed the document on the 17 March 2024. As there were no further questions raised by the meeting, acceptance was proposed by Ben Griffiths, seconded by Andrew Coombes that the Report be accepted. This was unanimously agreed.

**6.4 Supporting reports - PCC Working Groups Annual Governance Report and Deanery Synod Report:** Rev'd. Chris Park thanked the Chairs and Members of the Working Groups for contributing to the reports and acknowledged all the work that goes on. He invited questions but none were raised. Acceptance of all the Reports was proposed by Andy Smith, seconded by Sue Street. Agreed unanimously.

## **7. Report of Regular Church Activities in the Parish**

The Report had been circulated in advance and contained information of many different groups and organisations that operate in the Parish. The Chair thanked everyone who contributed to the reports which presented a varied and vibrant picture of renewed and continued activity within the Parish. No further questions were raised. The proposal was therefore made to accept the Report as presented: Proposed by Chris Clarke, Seconded Ben Griffiths, and unanimously agreed by the Meeting.

## **8. Election Nominations:**

**8.1 Parochial Church Council Elections:** With an Electoral Roll total of 205, the Parish may elect up to 15 members this year. A summary of changes taking place this year include:

- Alison Hodgson standing down following a 6-year term as Churchwarden at All Saints.
- Julia Stainforth standing down following a 3-year term as PCC member.
- Juliet Wright changing from elected lay member to Churchwarden at All Saints Church.

- There were no members eligible for re-election for a second 3-year term this year.

Additionally, at its meeting on 18 March 2024, the PCC agreed to allow an extension of one year to three members who had already served for six years. (Keith Blanshard, Ben Griffiths, and Barbara Hemingway). This was to support the expected increase in workload during the Vacancy in this year.

This meant that at the APCM there were 8 continuing lay members on the PCC, with up to 7 vacancies available for nominations.

Seven new nominations for PCC membership were received as follows:

1. Mr David Chettle: Proposed by Heather Wraight, Seconded Ian Richardson
2. Mrs Carol Gosling: Proposed by Jackie Aspin, Seconded Juliet Wright
3. Mr Steve Gosling: Proposed by Juliet Wright, Seconded Peter Aspin
4. Mrs Elaine Harvie: Proposed by Janet Stephen, Seconded Maureen Atkinson
5. Mrs Alison Hodgson: Proposed by Barbara Hemingway, Seconded Janet Stephen
6. Mr Ian Richardson: Proposed by Jackie Aspin, Seconded Peter Aspin
7. Mr Paul Tiffin: Proposed by Ben Griffiths, Seconded by Sarah Griffiths

As the number of candidates (7) did not exceed the number of seats that were available (7), all the candidates were duly declared elected.

Rev'd. Chris Park, on behalf of the meeting, thanked all the nominees for standing for the PCC and declared them duly elected. He also thanked Julia Stainforth for her service to the PCC over the past three years, and also expressed his expectation of her ongoing contribution as a member of the Eco Working Group. He also thanked Alison Hodgson for six years as Churchwarden at All Saints and looked forward to her ongoing role on the PCC.

Chris added further thanks to Dot Bevington as she has taken on the role of Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO), and to Ian Richardson as her Deputy. In addition, Chris thanked Dave Barker for the important and essential role of Health & Safety Officer which he has diligently undertaken for many years on behalf of the Church.

## **9. Vacancy Update – Summary**

In his role as PCC Lay Chair, Andrew Coombes summarised the Vacancy work that had been recently started and outlined the proposed timescales:

- The Diocese supports the appointment of a new Rector.

- We have started work on the Parish Profile which describes our Church, our Parish and where we believe God is leading us.
- We aim to receive guidance and agreement from Bishop John before his retirement in July.
- We will be choosing two representatives to join the interviewing panel.

**Timescales:** Typically, the process takes six to nine months.

From Now to June: Produce our Parish Profile  
Engage with our Church Family  
Gain agreement from the 'Diocese'  
Confirm our Parish Representatives

July and August: Advertise the Position

Sept and Oct: Interviews / Appointment

Jan 2025: New Rector starts/Service of Welcome

## **10. Any Other Business**

- (a) Sheila Whipp advised the meeting that she had been collecting the Children's Society Boxes for 15 years now but felt it was time to finish. She asked whether someone would be able to take on this role in her place, but that if not the collection would stop. After the meeting it was agreed that if no offers were received then a note will be inserted into the Weekly Bulletin.

In closing, Rev'd. Chris Park expressed his thanks once again to all those who had contributed to the administration of the APCM, including the Reports-writing and presentations.

The meeting was closed at 8.30 pm following a time of prayer.

The Rev'd. Chris Park, Associate Minister  
Chair