

PARISH OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, WOKINGHAM

WITH ST NICHOLAS'S, EMMBROOK

**Minutes of the annual meeting of parishioners held in St. Paul's Church and by Zoom
on Monday 5 July 2021**

Father Richard opened with words of welcome and a prayer.

Present

Father Richard Lamey in the Chair, 21 parishioners in church and 8 on Zoom.

Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Jane Bingham, Liz Gallagher, Tony Roberts and David Ruddock.

Minutes of Meeting Held on 19 October 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 2020 were accepted as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

Election of Churchwardens

Fr Richard announced that nominations had been received for two candidates, David Ruddock and Peter Wells to serve for a further year. In the absence of any other nominations, he declared them duly elected as Churchwardens, to general applause, and he thanked them for their work over the past year and their willingness to continue to serve in that role until the next APCM.

There being no other business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.15pm.

Lesley Ruddock

Secretary

Chairman.....

Date.....

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WITH ST NICHOLAS'S, EMMBROOK

**Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held in St. Paul's Church and by Zoom
on 5 July 2021**

Present:

Father Richard Lamey in the Chair, 21 parishioners in church and 8 on Zoom.

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Jane Bingham, Liz Gallagher, Tony Roberts and David Ruddock.

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 October 2020 were accepted as an accurate record and signed.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Election of Pro-Wardens of St Nicholas

There were two nominations for Pro-Warden. Mrs Liz Gallagher and Mrs Fiona Albinson having been duly proposed and seconded, and there being no other nominations, Fr Richard declared them elected as Pro-Wardens, to general applause. Fr Richard thanked Fiona for her willingness to serve again and extended the thoughts and prayers of all to Liz and her family at this time.

5. Appointment of Deputy Wardens

Fr Richard explained that it is proposed to appoint two Deputy Wardens who will take on the role in different ways. Pippa Sutton will work with the Churchwardens across the whole range of their work, while Mary Cassidy will focus on mission, spirituality and community. This is an exciting opportunity with the potential to increase what we do. The meeting agreed unanimously to proceed with these appointments, which will be ratified by the PCC. The PCC will appoint Pippa to Standing Committee and will co-opt Mary to PCC.

6. Changes in the Electoral Roll since the last meeting

Fr Richard thanked Mrs Teri Austen for her hard work in doing this important job. The new Roll now stands at 216 as against 220 on 27 September 2020. The names of those removed and added are detailed on p13 of the *Parish Reports*.

7. Election to Deanery Synod

We have one vacancy at Deanery Synod and Paul Armitage has offered to stand to fill that vacancy. It was unanimously agreed to accept his nomination and Paul was duly appointed.

8. Election of Parochial Church Councillors

Fr Richard explained that 4 members of the PCC had come to the end of their term of office, 1 for St Nick's and 3 for St Paul's. There were five existing vacancies. Susanna Allen, Andy Clark, Sally Dowling, Sue Davenport, Alan Harrison and Pippa Sutton were duly elected or re-elected to serve for 3 years and there are now 3 vacancies.

Fr Richard explained that Jean Vaughan was stepping down from PCC and Fr Richard wished to record his grateful thanks to her for her hard work and commitment to St Paul's and St Nick's.

9. Appointment of Sidespersons

Whilst the appointment of sidespeople will from now be the responsibility of the PCC, Fr Richard emphasised the importance of this role in the current pandemic to make people feel safe and welcomed and he thanked the teams at St Paul's and St Nick's for all that they had done and continued to do.

At St Paul's these are Jackie Alexander, Susanna Allen, Chris Barker, Alice Buddin, Jane Creasy, Gilly Crew, Tony Eggleston, Stuart Fairhead, Christine Field, Trish Gatland, John Griffin, Jo Gulliford, Alan Harrison, Rhoda Hart, Elizabeth Hunter, Noah Lamey, Brian Perris, Jenny Perris, Fiona Ross, Frances Self, Diana Tuck.

At St Nick's these are Fiona Albinson, Paul Armitage, Ann Battersby, Liz Gallagher, Lynne Judge, Geraldine Lea and Jean Vaughan.

As some are currently still shielding, we are a little bit short of people so any other volunteers are welcome.

10. Treasurer's Report and Presentation of Financial Statements for 2020

The Treasurer, Mr Lyn Austen, presented the statutory financial accounts for the year ended 31st December 2020, reminding all that the figures referred to both St Paul's and St Nicholas' churches. He then followed this up with an explanation of the various Funds, both restricted and unrestricted, which are maintained by the church.

Turning to the 2020 figures he started his presentation by giving an overview of parish finances comprising, firstly, unrestricted income that amounted to £159,114 reduced by some £14,500 compared with 2019, whilst unrestricted expenditure at £145,576 was also down by £15,000. The net surplus on the General Fund in 2020 was therefore a healthy and welcome £13,538. However, it was pointed out to the meeting that two exceptional items of income had helped to achieve this surplus - a significant, one-off, reduction in Parish Share of £7,000 and Brook Close rental income of nearly £8,500. Without these items the General Fund would have been in deficit by around £2,000. In addition the very successful broadband appeal generated just under

£5,000, part of which remains unspent and available for system upgrades and improvements.

Mr Austen then illustrated the various items of income in the General Fund using a pie chart, and this was supplemented with a detailed explanation of key sources of income. Of particular interest was income from planned giving amounting to £95,478 which had dropped by some 4%; however there had been a notable increase in donations through the year. As expected, cash collections were decimated through the closure of the church during 2020, whilst fund-raising and Spire income were also badly hit for associated reasons. He did however point out the successful introduction of contactless giving, using both the church card reader and the ability to donate by mobile phone/text.

A similar résumé of expenditure was then presented. The accompanying pie chart illustrated the major item of expense, Parish Share, which amounted to £80,597 or 55% of total expenditure. Mr Austen then gave a concise report on the remaining items of expense, drawing particular attention to mission giving, Diocesan fees, church running, service and ministry costs, and parish administration.

The various Restricted Funds were then reviewed, and more detailed analysis given relating to the Lighting and Restoration Funds. In particular he summarised the cash available for these purposes which amounted to £71,448 and £67,415 respectively at the end of the year, the latter figure including £21,000 in Lucky Numbers as this is also available for church restoration.

Turning to 2021 the Treasurer noted that his General Fund budget was constantly under review, reflecting the regular changes being made to the domestic economy. He would not be drawn on the possible outcome for 2021 but indicated that, on present information, a small deficit was likely in the second and third quarters and a larger one in the final 3-month period when the church's principal mission obligations had been settled. It was noted that the card reader was very useful, particularly for weddings and funerals and that the text giving on the live stream had been very successful. Mr Austen advised that consideration would be actively giving to joining the Parish Giving Scheme, which is index linked, which is used by parishes widely.

Finally the Treasurer extended thanks once again to Reg Morton for managing the Parish Fees account, to the sidespeople who have assisted in recording the Sunday morning collections at each church, to Stuart Fairhead for running the Stewardship process and claiming our monthly gift aid, to Tony Roberts and Liz Gallagher for looking after the St Nicholas finances and banking their weekly collections, to Louise and Vanessa in the parish office for their continuing support, and finally to Deidrie Geise for her very thorough and detailed examination of the accounts.

Following a question about whether we consider our insurance from Ecclesiastical to be competitively priced, Mr Austen explained that they had been our insurer for a number of years and claims had not affected the premiums. He had looked at other insurers and concluded that we are getting a good deal.

Fr Richard advised that roughly 25% of our Parish Share goes to support other, poorer areas of the Diocese. It is very encouraging that we have a surplus but there were particular events that

helped to reduce the Share, including Fr Richard's work as Acting Assistant Archdeacon and Fr Patrick Mukholi moving away.

Fr Richard explained that the PCC at its next meeting would be considering new fundraising ideas, some sensible, some not so sensible, and suggestions from anyone else would be gratefully received.

All those in attendance accepted the accounts as presented, and the Treasurer was thanked by John Sutton for his work in preparing them and presenting them so clearly.

11. Appointment of Independent Examiner

Mr Lyn Austen stated that Deidrie Geise was prepared to act as Independent Examiner again. This was proposed by Lyn Austen, seconded by Mary Cassidy, that she be appointed. ALL IN FAVOUR, no abstentions and no votes against.

A vote of thanks was recorded.

12. Parish Report – Fr Richard Lamey

Fr Richard encouraged everyone to continue listening to what God wants us to do. He noted that Living in Love and Faith will start formally in the autumn, which is the Church of England's attempt to think through issues in human sexuality in preparation for a vote at General Synod some time in the future. The clergy are currently receiving training in this. Whilst it is good in parts, it is a bit of a 'curate's egg' and we will need to work out how to engage with it.

Work has proceeded on the restoration following the arson attack in March. Faculty applications have been submitted for all the restoration needed. The altar will need to go away to be restored, chunks will be replaced in the pulpit and the smoke damage on the wall carefully removed.

There will be a new hanging to replace the MU banner which will celebrate all the diverse groups at St Paul's and the community we are called to serve. It is planned to create this in cross stitch and Pauline Wells is leading on this. It will need a faculty application.

There are also plans to commission a new icon of the woman with a haemorrhage being healed. This will not be covered by insurance. One suggested site for this is the north wall of the chancel by the altar rail as the painting will be returning to the Walter Chapel following restoration. Following some discussion, it was suggested that an alternative position could be on the wall next to the statue of Mary. This will also need a faculty.

Following a question, Fr Richard explained that we shouldn't have allowed the painting to go to the restorers until we had a faculty for the work. Work on the painting is now waiting until the Diocese gives its consent. The plan is also to remove the canopy over the painting so it can be hung properly, which will have to be funded by the parish.

Fr Richard said how fortunate he felt to be part of the team here and that we had done remarkably well though the pandemic. He thanked everyone for their support and also all those who join in on the live stream. Inevitably the restriction goalposts will move again but we are in good shape to respond. The main question will be how quickly people will become comfortable

with no social distancing, with singing, with no masks. At present, we are working to create two distinct areas of seating in church, one for those who wish to continue social distancing and one for those who would like to sit together. We will continue with the live stream, with hand sanitiser and everyone will be free to wear a mask if they wish. Please do contact Fr Richard if you have any comments to make on these plans.

Agility to react quickly has been so important over the last twelve month and so we now need to work fast once more and make the right decisions.

Fr Richard closed by saying how it was such a pleasure and a joy to be part of the St Paul's parish.

12. Deanery Synod Report

Fr Richard encouraged people to read this report on p15 of the *Parish Reports* as it was an interesting summary of what had been discussed during the year. There were no questions. Fr Richard thanked John Sutton for providing the report.

13. Churchwardens' Report on Fabric and Inventory 2020

Fr Richard referred everyone to p9 of the *Parish Reports*. The Churchwardens' Report was accepted and there were no questions or comments.

Louise Cole asked if there were future plans on the CCTV. Peter Wells advised that the current camera covers the door and whilst there may be a need to improve coverage with another camera, this will not be in the Walter Chapel.

14. Safeguarding

Safeguarding is a very important part of what we do. Chris Barker is our Safeguarding Officer who covers the administration. This is not just safeguarding of children but also of adults and all of us can be vulnerable at particular times in our lives. Knowing who to talk to about safeguarding is very important. We currently have a vacancy for Safeguarding Manager who oversees the policies. Please speak to Fr Richard if you would be interested in this role.

15. Parish Rooms Trust Accounts 2020

These Accounts have already been accepted by the PCC and Rhoda Hart provided a short overview of what has been financially and practically a worrying year.

However, grants have been able to be awarded once again in 2021 and some year 6 pupils at Emmbrook Juniors benefitted with grants towards their year 6 residential trip. We received a lovely thank you letter from the Headteacher. It is great to be able to support the community once again.

16. Any Other Business

None although it was noted how lovely it was to hear the bells rung once again.

At 9.30pm the meeting ended with prayer and the Grace.

Lesley Ruddock
Secretary

Chairman.....
Date.....