

PARISH OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, WOKINGHAM

WITH ST NICHOLAS'S, EMMBROOK

Minutes of the annual meeting of parishioners held in the Parish Rooms
on Sunday 23 April 2023 at 5pm.

Father Richard opened with words of welcome and a prayer.

Present

Father Richard Lamey in the Chair and thirty three parishioners.

Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from John Albinson, Ann Battersby, Mary Cassidy, Ken Davenport, Sally Dowling, Fiona Fairhead, Lynne Judge, Reg Morton.

Minutes of Meeting Held on 25 April 2022

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 April 2022 were accepted as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

Election of Churchwardens

Fr Richard announced that there were two posts of Churchwarden and two nomination had been received for Peter Wells and David Ruddock. In the absence of any other nominations, he declared them duly elected as Churchwarden, to general applause, and he thanked Peter for his work over the past year and both Peter and David for 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 5.10pm.

Lesley Ruddock

Chairman.....

Secretary

Date.....

PARISH OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, WOKINGHAM
WITH ST NICHOLAS'S, EMMBROOK
Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held in the Parish Rooms
on 23 April 2023

Present:

Father Richard Lamey in the Chair and 33 parishioners.

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from John Albinson, Ann Battersby, Mary Cassidy, Ken Davenport, Sally Dowling, Fiona Fairhead, Lynne Judge, Reg Morton.

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 April 2023 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 both for their willingness to serve again.

5. Appointment of Deputy Wardens

Fr Richard explained that Mary Cassidy and Pippa Sutton are both willing to continue in their roles as Deputy Wardens. Pippa Sutton will work with the Churchwarden across the whole range of their work, while Mary Cassidy will focus on mission, spirituality and community. The meeting agreed to continue 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 227 as against 223 on 27 March 2022. The names of those removed and added are detailed on p10 of the *Parish Reports*.

7. Election of Parochial Church Councillors

Fr Richard explained that 2 members of the PCC had come to the end of their term of office, and there were three existing vacancies. Teri Austen and Christopher Cipkin were duly re-elected to serve for 3 years and there are still 3 vacancies.

8. Election of Deanery Synod Reps

Fr Richard explained that the four Deanery Synod Reps had come to the end of their term of office. There were three nominations for Deanery Synod and Peter Wells, John Sutton and Paul Armitage were duly re-elected. There is one vacancy.

9. Appointment of Sidespersons

Whilst the appointment of sidespeople is now the responsibility of the PCC, Fr Richard emphasised the importance of this role 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 Susanna Allen, Peter Baker, Sarah Baker, Chris Barker, Alice Buddin, Jane Creasy, Gilly Crew, Tony Eggleston, Stuart Fairhead, Christine Field, Trish Gatland, Jo Gulliford, Alan Harrison, Rhoda Hart, Elizabeth Hunter, Noah Lamey, Chris Piper, Fiona Ross, Frances Self, Georgina Spencer, Nigel Traylor, Diana Tuck, Penny Wallace.

At St Nick's these are Fiona Albinson, Paul Armitage, Ann Battersby, Sally Dowling, Liz Gallagher, Lynne Judge, Susannah Riley and Jean Vaughan.

10. Treasurer's Report and Presentation of Financial Statements for 2022

The Treasurer, Mr Llewellyn Austen, presented the statutory financial accounts for the year ended 31st December 2022, 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, restricted and unrestricted, which are maintained by the church.

The presentation started with an overview of General Fund parish finances, specifically unrestricted income and expenditure which had resulted in a small deficit of £418, compared with the previous year's shortfall of £1,016.

Various items of income were then illustrated using a pie chart, and this was supplemented with a detailed explanation of their key sources. Of particular interest was income from planned giving and gift aid which, together, accounted for 76% of general fund receipts. Once again very little fund-raising took place during the year. Conversely it was pleasing to note the increasing use being made of contactless giving: the card reader and giving via text in particular.

A similar résumé of expenditure was then presented, the accompanying pie chart illustrating the various items of expense. As before the largest payment was Parish Share which amounted to just over £76,000 or 50% of total expenditure; this was once again paid in full and on time. Mr

Austen then gave a concise report on the remaining items of expense, drawing particular attention to Diocesan fees, church running, parish administration, and service and ministry costs. He also highlighted the church's continuing commitment to support our mission partners - USPG, the Children's Society and Soulscape – as well as payments made during the year to the Red Cross for relief in Ukraine and Pakistan.

The various Restricted Funds were then reviewed, and a more detailed analysis given relating to Lighting and Restoration Funds. In particular, he summarised the cash available for these purposes which amounted to £72,451 and £68,641 respectively at the end of the year, the latter figure including over £24,000 in the Lucky Numbers Fund which is also available for church restoration.

Turning to 2023 the Treasurer noted that his General Fund budget was constantly under review, reflecting the regular changes in the domestic economy. He was pleased to report that the introduction of the Parish Giving Scheme has gone well and that over 60% of regular givers have now adopted this modern and popular method of giving to their church. Whilst he would not be drawn on the possible outcome for the year, he indicated that on present information another small deficit was likely.

Finally Mr Austen 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.

Mr Austen was asked how the digital piano donation was recorded and he replied that it was shown as an asset, it was recorded in the inventory together with its estimated value.

Parishioners were reminded that there are still two outstanding major projects – the aisle roofs and the lighting. Other work may well be shown to be necessary by the Quinquennial Inspection due next month. A new architect has been appointed who is keen to get the work on the aisle roofs done. Once this has been done we can focus on the lighting.

Mr Austen was asked if the insurance had increased as a result of the arson attack. He replied that it had not, neither did it increase significantly following the fire in the bell tower.

All those in attendance accepted the accounts as presented, and the Treasurer was thanked for his work in preparing them.

11. Appointment of Independent Examiner

Mr Lyn Austen stated that Deidrie Geise had decided that it was time for a fresh examiner and Jason Searancke has agreed to be the examiner for 2023. Jason was formally proposed by David Ruddock, seconded by Liz Gallagher ALL IN FAVOUR, no abstentions, and no votes against.

Lyn Austen has already thanked her for her work on this year's accounts and happily agreed to thank her for the whole period she had been examiner.

12. Parish Report – Fr Richard Lamey

Fr Richard's report will be found on p4 of the *Parish Reports*. He has also tried to capture some further reflections of the pandemic and these are also recorded in the *Parish Reports*.

Fr Richard reported that the clergy team are currently thinly spread with Cara being unwell and fewer retired clergy to help. We need to be careful what we commit to with finite resources. There were no questions.

13. Deanery Synod Report

Fr Richard encouraged people to read this report on p15 of the *Parish Reports*. There were no questions.

14. Churchwardens' Report on Fabric and Inventory 2022

Fr Richard referred everyone to p6 of the *Parish Reports*. The Churchwardens' Report was accepted and there were no further questions or comments.

15. Parish Giving Scheme

The Treasurer informed the meeting that the church joined the Parish Giving Scheme about 12 months ago. We will continue to encourage parishioners to switch to this scheme as there is no reason not to join. Instead of using standing orders, envelopes or cash, we sign a Direct Debit order. The Scheme collects our payments and processes the Gift Aid on them. Each month, Lyn gets two bank transfers from them compared to 60-70 individual transactions. Our workload is significantly reduced and there is no additional cost.

Numbers using the scheme have grown steadily which provides an easy way for giving to increase with inflation and currently about 61% of givers use the scheme representing about 75% of income.

16. Parish Rooms Trust

The 2022 accounts for the Parish Rooms Trust were included in the APCM documents. There were no questions on the accounts.

Rhoda Hart wished to record formally her thanks to Jason Searancke for examining these accounts, for his willingness to continue in 2023 and also to Vanessa Hemmi for all her hard work in the office.

Rhoda also explained that a lot of work was done in 2022 to rebuild relationships with schools after the pandemic and to explain that the Trust has funds available to support people in the

community but that applications for grants were not readily forthcoming. The Committee is looking to see if there is potential to widen the scope of the grant criteria.

17. Any Other Business

Andy Clark announced to the meeting that he is trying to set up a number of lectures in Wokingham covering aspects of Climate Change – keep a look out for further information.

At 6.20pm the meeting ended with prayer and the Grace.

Lesley Ruddock
Secretary

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