

## **APCM 2020**

**Present in church (34 adults; 18 households of 24 individuals on zoom)**

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### **Annual vestry meeting**

#### **1. Welcome and Introduction**

Johnny welcomed everyone to the meeting whether physically present in person at the church or on zoom. He explained how questions can be asked given it is not permitted to accept questions verbally from the floor. Johnny asked permission to record the zoom meeting. This was agreed by those participating via zoom.

A question had been asked of Johnny this week about the completion of the re-ordering work at STPH and he confirmed that this is far from finished at present with decoration, flooring and seating to be finalised. It is anticipated that these will be completed within the next month.

Johnny opened the meeting in prayer.

### **Apologies**

Steve & Barbara Ball; Audrey Rainer, Eileen Kattenhorn and Jean Pledger.

### **Minutes from 2019**

These had been published on the website. There were no questions about the Minutes. Sue Haward proposed and Sally Minnet seconded these Minutes which were subsequently unanimously accepted and adopted. Johnny invited the church family to ask questions of the Church Secretary, Vicar or PCC throughout the year rather than wait until the APCM in order for all to feel involved. Copy of Minutes are always available from David Pearson, Church Secretary.

#### **2. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising that are not to be covered in the meeting.

#### **4. Parish Charities**

Sue Haward spoke to this. Sue invited that people contact her or Chris Redmond in respect of the two Parish charities which support the homeless and the allotments at SPSV - The Cooper Coal charity and Edgell's Allotment Charity.

#### **5. Election of Church Wardens**

Johnny clarified that there had been no other nominations for Church Warden, Deanery or PCC.

Sue Haward had been proposed by David Pearson and seconded by Paul Wiggins. John Wigginton had been proposed by Kevin Wren and seconded by Paul Wiggins. This was unanimously accepted both from those present and those on zoom. Johnny prayed for Sue and John as they serve for a further year in this capacity.

## **The Annual Vestry Meeting closed at 11.41am.**

### **APCM**

#### **1. Minutes of 2019 meeting**

There were no questions about last year's meeting. Pauline Pearson proposed and Kevin Swift seconded these be accepted as a true and accurate record.

#### **2. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising that were not to be covered in the remainder of the meeting.

#### **3. Proposed Rules amendment**

David Pearson spoke to this item. This proposal had been put forward by the PCC. David explained that the governing rules of the C of E are instituted by parliament and that the latest rules came into operation on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020 so, until recently, PCC members served for a defined term of office. Under the new rules however, there is no future defined term of office unless the PCC lay down such rules. The PCC believe that there should be a defined period to enable new people to come through to serve and have recommended a maximum of two terms of three years after which they would need to stand down for a year. Whilst this is a PCC recommendation, it has to be agreed by the APCM which will therefore come into place next year. David suggested that there is a straight vote on whether to accept this recommendation given under government guidelines, we cannot discuss this today and that those who oppose, can vote against. David Pearson proposed that under the church rules 2020 two terms of three years would be the maximum term someone could serve without standing down for a year. Andy Birmingham seconded this. 1 in opposition (Babs Moore) from those present and one (Paul Wiggins) on zoom.

#### **4. PCC Elections**

Johnny thanked those who had stepped down from their roles on PCC and Deanery over the course of the last year. The meeting expressed its appreciation by clapping.

There are four vacancies on the PCC and the following had been proposed and seconded. Martin Andrews proposed by John Wiggington and seconded by Ian Carpenter. Andy Birmingham proposed as a full member of the PCC by David Pearson and seconded by Paul Wiggins. Rob Boswell proposed by Barbara Ball and seconded by Anna Culliford. Karen Ledger proposed by Angela Chapman and seconded by David Pearson. This was unanimous both from those present and those on zoom.

David Pearson prayed for those who were elected unopposed.

#### **5. Deanery Elections**

There are three places available to us as a church - Julie Douglas proposed by David Pearson and seconded by Sue Haward and David Pearson proposed by Paul Wiggins and seconded by John Wiggington. One vacancy remains which won't be filled. This was unanimous both from those

present and those on zoom. Sue Haward prayed for David and Julie. Johnny clarified that those who serve on deanery are also members of the PCC.

#### **5. Annual Report to church.**

This report had been prepared by David Pearson, Church Secretary on the proceedings and activities of the PCC and had been available via the website. Johnny commended this report to the church.

#### **6. Electoral Roll Officer**

David Pearson reported on the changes to the electoral role. There are currently 170 on the electoral roll which is down 9 from last year. 8 people had joined the electoral roll and Johnny is aware of others who would have liked to join but had not been baptised or confirmed given the absence of such ceremony this year because of COVID. 12 have moved away and five have sadly died. Just over half of the electoral roll live in the parish of Hextable and Swanley Village.

#### **8. Finance Report – Chris Redmond...**

Chris commented that it had been a real privilege to serve and thanked his wife and family for their support. The church expressed its thanks to Chris for acting as Treasurer.

Chris reported that in 2019 there was a £9k surplus which took reserves to £33k at the end of 2019. We increased our giving to the Diocese by 2.5% last year. In 2020 we have reduced our giving to the Diocese which means that our reserves have increased to £60k; this will fund future staff needs to resource the mission of God in the parish. Chris thanked those that have given to the General Fund and invited all to consider gift aiding that do not do so already. There had been no questions texted in or received via zoom for Chris. Johnny again invited any questions of Chris throughout the year and that we pray for Chris on a Monday night as he does the accounts. Jane England had text in her thanks for Chris' diligence as Treasurer. The church showed its appreciation by clapping.

#### **9. Annual fabric, goods and ornaments of the church report by the Church Wardens**

John Wiggington, Church Warden reported that ast year we had our Archdeacon's inspection of Records and Ornaments by the then Area Dean, Kenneth Clark, all of which was found to be present and correct.

Last week we had our Quinquennial inspection at St. Paul's, which is the 5 yearly inspection carried out on behalf of the Diocese. Although the official report will take a while to come through, verbally we were commended on the records we have kept of the works carried out at St. Paul's, and there were no surprises. Essentially it boils down to everything that should be there is still there. St. Peters' inspection will take place on 28<sup>th</sup> October and we aren't anticipating any problems with that one either.

Last year Sue Haward contacted the Church Recorders Society to find out whether St. Paul's would qualify for a team coming in to form a detailed inventory of everything within the church and its graveyard. This can take up to 6 months to complete. Unfortunately, they were unable to

take it on, but did suggest that if anyone from the parish would be interested, they offer training on how to record a church. However, this was pre COVID and there has been no subsequent update.

#### **10. Reports as per Annual report**

The report covered the sweep of church life that happened on a daily basis pre COVID. This was made available 7 days prior to today's meeting and can also be found on the church website.

#### **11. Vicar's report**

Johnny talked of 'challenge, gift and hope' as three words before us. Challenge because this is a hard time unless you have previously been through the war; 11 of 14 people who he has spent time with pastorally in recent days are facing employment difficulties and challenges. The challenges are real for people; people behaving in unexpected ways and doing unexpected things, adults turning up asking Johnny to do things beyond his ability or control. There is a 'blanket of depression over the world' if you believe the words of Michelle Obama and Johnny recognises the malaise across church life and the community – how do we manage if we do not have God in our lives and lean into Him? In all challenges, however, there are hidden gifts. Johnny invited us to reflect on the 'hidden gifts' in our own lives at this time. Rom 5 v 1-5 is, he commented, an important text for these days. Johnny said he needs to have fresh hope to be a follower of Jesus and a helpful Vicar 'hope in heaven even through the thickest clouds'.

In other parish news Roy and Noel Chiltern celebrate their 53<sup>rd</sup> wedding anniversary today – pray on for them and their health; pray for Tim Jacobs who has had a pacemaker put in this week and is currently in DVH. We miss those that have died this year since COVID; promoted to glory but lost to us.

Johnny finished speaking to his report by reminding us of our mission statement 'Loving God, growing family, increasing hope'.

#### **12 Appointment of independent examiners**

No change is recommended this year.

#### **13. AOB – Questions and comments**

Johnny invited questions via text or the chat function on zoom. There were none.

Johnny reported that he and David had had eight questions raised by one person in writing prior to the meeting which they had answered privately but wanted to account publicly as well. Johnny spoke to the written answers, text of those replies below.

*Question 1: "I am a little mystified over Adam now being paid for being worship leader? Don't think worship leaders have been paid in the past"*

Written answer: 'I sent you five months' worth of Minutes a few weeks back in which you will have read references to employing a worship leader. The role is significantly different from before and more so since the start of the pandemic. I know you have had the August Minutes.

but for ease I am pasteing the conclusions reached after a lot of deliberation on how many hours the role needed, based on an agreed job description. So, this was what was agreed:

***Staffing role for Worship and Online Ministry Leader.***

*Anna Culliford declared an interest in this item and left the room.*

*It became clear following the last meeting that more discussion was needed on this role and to clarify the issues so that a contract could be issued for a 1st September start. Johnny reminded that we needed to agree whether 2, 3 or 3.5 days for Worship and Online Ministry Leader post. Johnny had reflected on the needs of the church and believed that this was best served by a two-day role which would mean dispensing with Wednesday Worship. Johnny commented that it is easier to increase rather than decrease hours and would prefer greater parity between the paid staff members. Adam understands that we will come back to him with a contractual offer for 1st September 2020 for a two-year period. He would like to build a future with us and some personal continuity. With the uncertainty around the pandemic and therefore the shape of our future needs, we could make a mid-course adjustment going forward as the needs change. Comments were made about the detail around how the proposed number of hours was reached. Di agreed that the parity between the paid staff roles were important and, looking ahead, review will be important to accommodate transition and post transition. A 15 hours contract was proposed by Andy Birmingham and seconded by Angela Chapman. All agreed.*

Johnny repeated that there had been a journey from May 2020 on this.

Question 2. *“Is Noah’s title Intern or Pastoral Apprentice? Are these different roles? Does it make a financial difference to the church?”*

Written answer: ‘This is best answered by referring you to the June Minutes which you have seen. As you will see this is a legal issue. It makes no difference, financially, to the church. To quote:

**a. *Other staffing updates: Position titles, Peter Gower & Noah Douglas***

***Position titles.***

*David sent the PCC a paper in advance of the meeting setting out legal and policy issues, with examples, relating to the use of Pastoral Apprentices, Interns and others in work experience capacities in churches. In summary, the term ‘apprentice’ has legal connotations; they are on a paid contract to learn and involves following an approved course of study. Interns can be volunteers provided they receive limited expenses, such as for food and travel (but if they receive any money that can’t be regarded as a reimbursement of expenses, this counts as payment and they should therefore be paid the national minimum wage). The terms of ‘engagement’ should be set out and agreed in writing from the commencement. Within our context an internship could last more than a year. As the intern is volunteering their services, it could last for as long as they were prepared to work on that basis. In the light of this, PCC agreed that the terminology*

*used to describe the work experience offered, the title 'intern' (followed by a description of any specifics – worship, media etc) should be used instead of 'apprentice'.*

### **Noah**

*Noah has completed the safer recruitment process and has been offered the position of Intern (Media and Communication) for the coming year 20/21. He is set to move into the parish on Monday 29th June and start his role on Wednesday 1st July. He will do circa 21 hours per week, probably Sunday to Tuesday, alongside the pursuit of other opportunities. Sue will be his line manager and Johnny and Julie will be the host family.*

Johnny repeated that we do a lot of things on a 'shoe string budget' and that he will be coming back to the church regarding resourcing appropriate staffing for the church going forward.

**Question 3.** *Suggestion of 4 new teams pending? What are these and who will be on them?*

Verbal reply: Johnny had suggested that there are four teams pending in church life in the written reports to the APCM – 2 of the 4 that have been mentioned to the PCC are Social Action and Eco Church and Fabric. There are, he said, people in church life who care deeply about creation and social action and are people willing to serve on that team e.g. Chris and Jenny Waddington, David and Leonie Lawrence and Julie Douglas. This would, therefore represent a logical line of faithfulness and ministry. Di Birmingham heads a team for HR to look at ensuring we follow best practice. The Fabric Team needs to consist of Sue Haward as our Church Administrator, Kevin Swift etc to ensure that our fabric is as good as it can be for the ministry we undertake. Johnny asked whether there were any other questions about this.

**Question 4.** *Relationships with local schools-how are these continuing? Are there visits?*

Verbal reply: Johnny commented that there are significant restrictions on attending school for the remainder of this academic year, hence the necessity to reduce the hours of our C & Y Worker when she returned from furlough. Johnny did a video message for the schools last week and is doing a lesson in the church building at SPSV tomorrow. He has regular conversation with both head teachers in a support capacity and is on the governing body at St Pauls.

**Question 5.** *£180,000 seems an awfully large amount for taking down a hoarding? Can this be justified?? Never heard.... not at all £600K problem...*

Verbal reply: Johnny corrected this understanding outlining the plans for the external work – there is one quote in only as Johnny has struggled to obtain other quotes despite requesting these. We cannot take the hoarding down until the site is safe which it will not be until the external groundworks are done. Johnny commented that the budget for all the outstanding work to the annex is £600k with 18-24 weeks of work once the finances have been secured. Our only struggle is the sum of money that needs to be raised to realise this. Johnny understands the frustration in the community about the hoarding not being down. He invited prayer for the PCC as we discuss this again tomorrow night. He assured the church that behind the scenes, work is constantly being done with regards to the annex.

In better news, Johnny was happy to report that the kitchen in the Old Schoolhouse will be replaced FOC having written 23 letters to kitchen companies. One company, Stoneham Kitchens has come back and offered a kitchen other than the electrical appliances e.g. dishwasher. We are continuing to chip away at the work needed to complete the Annex committed to seeing the job through to completion.

Question 6. *'If Chris Redmond is coming off PCC how can he continue to report on church finances? In my experience, the treasurer has always been a member of the PCC'*. Johnny confirmed that Chris has completed his two terms as a PCC member and that he will now be co-opted onto the PCC just as Andy Birmingham has been co-opted as PSO until today when he was elected a member of the PCC.

Written answer: 'I don't know whether Babs Moore was a member or not for all her years, but until recent years there was a limit on the number of terms someone could serve. She might have attended some of that time without being a member as such. However, the Church Rules 2020 have removed the limit, though the APCM can set one if they wish. The PCC are recommending that a limit of two terms is agreed. Chris will have completed two terms. The new PCC has the power to co-opt him as a voting member at their first meeting, or he could attend on a non-voting basis. Rest assured the Treasurer will be in the meetings'.

Question 7. *I still haven't seen any PCC minutes on our church website? My understanding is that these are a public document?*

Written answer: 'It's a document available to anyone on the electoral roll and we have just started including the information in the weekly email as each set become available. Unfortunately, there is a technical problem which prevents them being added to the website and we can't produce them until a new one is developed which is under consideration'.

Question 8. *Is it possible to have PCC minutes for October?*

Written answer: I can't produce Minutes until after the meeting and it's not happening until Monday! The Minutes won't be available until after the November meeting when they are approved.

Verbal answer: Johnny commented that there has been a discussion on PCC about whether the Minutes should be available on the website and these are ongoing. There is some concern about posting the Minutes on the website. The PCC fully recognise that the PCC Minutes are a public record and that they can now be requested from either Sue at the Church Office or David as Church Secretary. These were previously available in the red folder in the lobby area but this has now been remodelled.

Johnny commented that we try to make business meetings enjoyable; Jane England commented via Zoom that the meetings are positive. There were no further questions asked from the floor or via Zoom.

A question was asked about when the lift would be put in but there is no answer to this at present as it is part of the complete works for the Annex.

Johnny thanked the church on behalf of those of us that live at The Vicarage.

Sue closed the meeting in prayer at 12.30pm.