

**St Peter and St Paul, Wadhurst
Annual Parochial Church Meeting**

held on Monday 29th April 2019 at Wadhurst Parish Church at 8.00pm

After an exceptionally warm Easter followed by a storm, the day had been cool and cloudy with sunny spells.

AVM Agenda

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from David Scott, Anthony Dunnett, Ian Fitzgerald, Garth Cooper, Heather Woodward, Lesley Thompson, Angie Kateley and Sarah Stewart.

2. Opening Prayer

The meeting was opened with readings and prayer.

3. Minutes of meeting held on 26th April 2018

The minutes were agreed and signed.

4. Election of Churchwardens

Nomination papers had been received from Chris Bithell and Vanessa Sharman. Both Chris and Vanessa are willing to serve.

5. Notification of Churchwardens' Visitations

Chris Bithell and Vanessa Sharman are willing to attend the Visitation at All Saints Crowborough on 20th June.

Ruth Dunnett came forward to thank Anne Brignell who is stepping down after 2 terms as Churchwarden. Ruth thanked her for 6 years of great responsibility and hard work. During Anne's first term there was the re-ordering of the church when many tasks were involved – even hours spent cleaning the church (with Arthur's help!) to make it ready for Sunday services and during the second term there was the Vacancy when Anne, together with the other Churchwardens, helped the church community through this period. Anne has been a good and faithful servant. Gifts were presented to Anne and Arthur.

Anne, in reply, was grateful for the willing people who have helped her. She thanked the patrons and everyone else who have done such a lot of work for the church during her time as Churchwarden. She feels that Chris and Vanessa will be a good team.

The Vicar added his personal thanks. Anne ensured that all the work was completed on the Vicarage before their arrival – not an easy job dealing with the diocese – and was much appreciated by himself and Heather.

The Vicar presented a gift to Michael Toynbee who is stepping down after 60 years as a PCC member. His wealth of experience and wisdom during these many years has been much appreciated.

APCM Agenda

6. Minutes of meeting held on 26th April 2018

Covered in Item 3

7. Matters arising

None

8. Adoption of the Annual Report and Financial Statement for year ending 31st December 2018

i Adoption of the Annual Account

The Treasurer expressed his and the Finance committee sincere thanks to Jean as Church Administrator for all her hard work and diligence in maintaining the cash book and church finances during the year and the additional roles and responsibilities she had taken on during the vacancy. Jean also prepared the reports, accounts and materials for Lindeyer Francis Ferguson Limited (LFF) review.

The Report and Accounts consists of two sections, Chairperson Report and Financial Statement of Accounts. The PCC also signed a Letter of Representation to examiners that PCC has discharged its duties as Trustees and that there were no adverse matters outstanding. The PCC anticipated a shortfall in income and overall deficit of around £14,000 during 2018 due to additional expenditure arising from the vacancy and an accounting accrual reclassification for LFF 2018 fees.

The Treasurer highlighted the PCC had moved the operating accounts to Nat West Tunbridge Wells following the closure of Wadhurst branch, Chris Bithell acting as Chair during the vacancy had signed off the PCC Report and the PCC under the leadership of the Churchwardens had carried out all the Objectives and regular Activities of the church.

Financial review:

PCC had expected 2018 budget expenditure over income deficit to be in region £13,000/£14,000. Income was down £4,000 on 2017 largely due to declining planned giving and donations. Expenditure was up £11,000. After non-cash items including depreciation £7,041, net expenditure deficit on the Focus designated fund and Quinquennial expenditure the net expenditure on unrestricted funds was £21,678. Expenditure increased largely due to incremental £7,000 costs due to vacancy, increased churchyard expenditure (£2,000) and the requirement to accrue 2018 LFF expenses of £4,000.

PCC new Reserve Policy:

The Treasurer highlighted that the Reserve Policy would not be met for 2018 and reiterated Church House view that 3 months Reserves Policy was more than adequate. The December 2018 year end free Unrestricted Reserves was 1.9 months, down from 3.5 months in 2017. The PCC in March amended and approved Reserve Policy for an unrestricted free reserve target of three months of unrestricted expenditure. In addition, there are certain designated funds (Building fund, Focus and Fabric fund) that along with the PCC investments would be available in extremis and currently sufficient to meet six months unrestricted expenditure. The new PCC Reserve Policy is reflected in the Accounts 2018.

The Treasurer noted further decline in unrestricted free reserves to £26,582.

Statement of Financial Accounts:

There were five new Parish Giving donors in 2018.

Total funds (Unrestricted and Restricted funds) declined £26,637 from £522,973 in 2017 to £496,336 in 2018. Total funds decline consists of net unrestricted expenditure £21,678 after depreciation. Unrealised loss on investments £1,876 and £3,083 deficit on restricted funds

Balance sheet:

Fixed assets declined £7,041 due to depreciation of Carillon Cottage and church/cottage fixtures and fittings. The unrestricted cash shortfall during 2018 was met from church deposits with CCLF, (Current assets). With exception of St. George's Hall all Restricted funds were self-financed.

Notes:

Unrestricted voluntary income (PGS) and restricted income decreased year on year and explain net expenditure shortfall for unrestricted activities, Focus, St George's Hall, Carillon Cottage and Cameo.

Unrestricted donations also included £1,150 donations for Vicarage decoration. Total Funds carried forward £418,998, a decrease on unrestricted funds of approximately £23,000 and restricted funds carried forward of £77,338, a decrease of £3,063.

Fees for wedding & funerals down on 2017 Church running costs include quinquennial expenditure in 2018. Increase in Unrestricted costs largely the effect from additional clergy costs (£3,000), redecoration of vicarage (£2,000) and upkeep of services (£2,000) and LFF 2018 fees (£4,000). Focus expenditure exceeded income in 2018 due to a fall in advertising fees and circulation.

Charitable giving and vouchers were unchanged from 2017, as planned.

All debtors' payments have been received January 2019; Creditors include LFF 2018 Account fees paid in 2019, £4,000 and Stonegate & Tidebrook wedding fees.

The Treasurer detailed reason for St George's Hall and Focus decline in trading income and revenues, (note 13), Reorder of church (Restricted fund) is now closed and addition of new Wadhurst Friends (Disability), Senior Lunch and Afternoon Fellowship fund.

There were several questions from the members including confirmation by the Treasurer of Wadhurst Parish Council £3,000 Grant for 2018.

The Treasurer concluded his remarks. Peter Thompson proposed the adoption of the 2019 Accounts, seconded by Mark Kateley, which was agreed.

ii Appointment of independent examiner of accounts

The Treasurer recommended to APCM the re appointment of Lindeyer Francis Ferguson Limited (LFF) chartered accountants to prepare and examination for the PCC 2019 Report and Accounts. Peter Thompson proposed and Vanessa Sharman seconded LFF appointment for 2019, which was approved.

The Treasurer, Paul Stephens, was thanked for all his hard work throughout the year.

9. Confirmation of Deanery Synod representation

The Deanery and Diocese records show that we have one representative (George Pulman) and one vacancy. A church of our size is entitled to have 4 representatives and the Vicar will make the Deanery and Diocese aware that our 4 representatives will be George Pulman, Mark Kateley, Vanessa Sharman and Hollie Butler.

10. Election of 3 Parochial Church Council representatives

3 PCC representatives are willing to serve a second term:

Lynda Wight

Sarah Stewart
Richard Lonsdale

11. Appointments

a. Deputy churchwardens

It was agreed that the following should serve as deputy Churchwardens:

Peter Dwyer
Ian Fitzgerald
Martin Lindsay
Steve Fraser

b. Sidesmen

It was agreed that the following should serve as sidesmen:

Martin Turner
James Ward
Paul Stephens
Heather Woodward
Lynn & Arthur Dewar
Judy Alexander
Sheila & Garth Cooper
Peter Dwyer
Michael Hardcastle
Sheila & Roger Lockwood
Chris & Ian Stuart
Lucy & Steve Swanton
Brian Tuck
Mary Brewer
Heather Ratcliff
Andrew Ratcliff
George Pulman
Janet & John Fuller

c. Electoral Roll Officer

Jean Sermon is willing to continue.

d. Health and Safety Officer

Ian Fitzgerald is willing to continue.

e. Safeguarding Officer

Vanessa Sharman is willing to continue until the June PCC meeting.

f. Disclosure Officer

As above.

12. Electoral Roll report

The number on the Electoral Roll is 202. This is down from 240 last year but this is usual when the electoral roll is renewed as it was this year.

13. Deanery Synod report

Mark Kateley had submitted the Deanery Synod report

14. Reports on church life

- a. Discipleship Action Group – report provided by Ruth Dunnett
- b. Homegroups - report provided by Angie Kateley
- c. Ministry Action Group - report provided by Jackie Scott
- d. Worship Action Group - report provided by Anthony Dunnett
- e. Grid 78:4 Youth Group - report provided by Anita Justice
- f. Rotherfield Deanery Synod – see Item 13
- g. Safeguarding - report provided by Vanessa Sharman
- h. St George’s Hall - report provided by Brian Tuck
- i. CTIW - report provided by Stephen Stordy
- j. Fabric & Quinquennial - report provided by Ian Fitzgerald
- k. Sunday J Club - report provided by Lynda Wight
- l. Carillon Cottage - report provided by Michael Hardcastle
- m. Pastoral Assistant, Jellybeans, J Club, Mission - report provided by Hollie Butler

The Vicar highlighted Grid 78:4 Youth Group – new leaders will be needed to replace Anita & Andrew Justice who are stepping down after the summer.

Also noted – there is no representative for St Peter & St Paul on the CTIW committee. The Vicar hopes someone will volunteer for this.

Hollie Butler’s contract ends in September. We need to establish continuity.

Vanessa Sharman feels that it is inappropriate to continue as Safeguarding and Disclosure Officer now that she is Churchwarden. Vanessa is willing to continue until the June PCC by which time everything will be in order and it will be a suitable time to hand over to her successor.

15. Chairman’s remarks

The Vicar thanked everyone who prepared the reports. He is thankful to all who take responsibility for these activities.

Paul has spent his first 3 months at St Peter & St Paul getting to know people and listening. He noted that in last year’s minutes Jeremy James was thanked for leaving a vibrant church and he feels this is what he has joined. There are lots of things happening for the size of the church.

Paul’s 2 priorities are:

To address the leadership structure.

To address finance – although we are operating at a deficit – we must have money for important things.

Paul & Heather were amazed at the welcome they received in January and they are pleased to be here.

16. Any other business

Michael Hardcastle hoped Paul & Heather are enjoying their new home and life in Wadhurst. He is grateful for all they are doing and looks forward to Paul’s leadership.

17. Closing prayer

The meeting closed in prayer at 9.10pm.

