

Minutes of Parish Meeting and Annual Parochial Church Meeting, The Bourne Parish

Via Zoom, Sunday 25th October, 7.30pm

Parish Meeting

Chaired by the vicar, Rev'd John Morris

Election of churchwardens

Michèle England and Peter Neukom, having been nominated as churchwardens, were unanimously elected by the meeting.

The vicar thanked them for their outstanding service to the parish especially during the challenging period of lockdown.

The meeting closed.

=====

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Chaired by the vicar, Rev'd John Morris, who opened the meeting with prayers.

- 1. Minutes** of the Parish Meeting and APCM of 28th April 2019 were approved unanimously with one minor amendment. Proposed by Nigel Cuthbert and seconded by Ron Mansfield.
- 2. Election of new lay members to the PCC.** The vicar thanked those retiring - Rosie Oates and Nigel Lewis - and noted that 5 nominations had been received for the 5 vacancies. Ann Williams, Brian White, Stewart Davidson, Mike Barter and John Maddox were duly elected by the meeting to the PCC.

The vicar noted that Nigel Lewis had agreed to serve for a further term as PCC secretary and electoral roll officer and would, along with Ruth Moore, Safeguarding Officer, be co-opted to the new PCC at its first meeting on 12th November 2020.

- 3. Election of deanery synod representatives.** The vicar thanked Gail Kyle, Yvonne Connolly and Rachel Neukom for their service and noted that Yvonne had agreed to serve for a further 3-year term as this is now permitted under the Church Representation Rules. Yvonne was nominated at the meeting by Michèle England and seconded by Mo Cuthbert. One further nomination had been received before the meeting, that of Janet Stephen. Yvonne and Janet were duly elected by the meeting as deanery synod representatives. It was noted that 2 further vacancies for

these roles existed and these might be approved subsequently by the PCC should nominations be forthcoming.

4. **Electoral Roll.** Nigel Lewis, PCC secretary and Electoral Roll Officer reported that there were 214 members on the electoral roll after the revision earlier this year – 7 additions 3 removals (210 in 2019).

5. **Vicar's report**

The vicar referred parishioners to the pre-circulated annual report for factual aspects relating to 2019. He commented that 2020 was proving very challenging for all, with restrictions on seeing friends and the format of new services with the dehumanising impact of wearing face masks. Christian fellowship had taken on a whole new depth of meaning.

St Thomas's. Before lockdown the congregation had continued to grow. The Remembrance Day service in 2019 was attended by over 600 members of the congregation and local community. Following lockdown, the online services had attracted large numbers.

The musical tradition at St Thomas's continued to be widely admired, although the ability to maintain the number of choristers during lockdown and social-distancing restrictions was an immense challenge. As pointed out over several years, the organ at St Thomas's needs refurbishment and this, as well as a potential renewal of seating, might benefit from the proceeds of a recently received legacy. The new PCC would review these opportunities and consult more widely across the parish.

At **St Martins**, a lovely church, the key challenge is to make the church's specialness appeal to new worshippers; a few new members had joined in 2019.

At **Brambleton Hall**, the traditional congregation numbers were static, but the transfer of the Gather@4 service had been successful, certainly until lockdown. We await planning approval for the new play area and are seeking tenants to replace the closed nursery.

For the **parish as a whole**, the vicar gave thanks that the parish is still flourishing compared to many others in the diocese. The new curate – Sandy – now ordained, had made a wonderful contribution to parish life and through God's grace we have found new ways to worship and touched the hearts of many within and outside our community. The vicar ended by stating that The Bourne is a special place and community and thanked all for their support in 2019 and 2020.

On behalf of the parish, the vicar thanked Revd Elaine Collins for her marvellous service to the parish over many years – including a vacancy period - and wished her continued blessings in her new ministry at Haslemere parish.

6. Presentation of Financial Statements for 2019.

Michael Cock, Treasurer, presented a summary of the financial outcome for 2019. Overall expenditure, at £287k, was lower than in 2018 which had included significant spending on the refurbishment of Brambleton Hall. General Funds registered a £1k surplus whilst restricted funds – Brambleton Hall, Remembrance Garden and Youthwork- registered a deficit of £18k; this reflected planned spending of funds already raised.

General reserves at year end represented 4 months' cash expenditures, slightly higher than the minimum level set of 3 months.

Restricted reserves mainly related to the Bourne Youth Trust, where investments had increased from £211k in 2012 to £288k in 2019, despite the fact that all income was used to support youthwork in the parish

In 2020 Michael forecast a £9k deficit for the general fund; cash collections were down by 55% (£16k) and no doubt the important Christmas period would be severely affected. However, planned giving and 'one off' donations remained robust and reduced costs, including accepting grants from the diocese to reduce parish share, had helped greatly.

Gail Kyle asked why the Masindi Fund is so big (at £6k)? Michael stated that funds were being held until we were confident that it was safe to transfer funds to the Ugandan orphanage and that funds would be used for the purposes intended.

Ruth Moore asked whether we are taking full advantage of Gift Aid. Michael confirmed that for the vast majority of giving (via the Parish Giving Scheme or regular standing orders) this was the case; but that one-off donations made via Church Suite were not yet reclaiming gift aid and the finance team was working to address this.

Gail Kyle asked what the progress was on potentially letting the flat at St Thomas's. The vicar confirmed that the process was continuing with Waverley Council – the aim was that letting income would subsidise the rental on the curate's accommodation.

Andrew Tuck asked whether the levels of committed giving were comparable with other parishes across the diocese. Michael invited Nigel Lewis to respond. Nigel had

not seen recent analysis but felt that The Bourne was still below diocesan average levels of giving.

Michael and the Finance, Stewardship and Administration working group were thanked by the vicar for their work throughout the year.

7. Appointment of independent examiners for 2019.

Wise and Co were re-appointed by the meeting unanimously. The treasurer stated that they had done a good job and fees had been stable for a number of years.

8. Fabric report

Michèle England reported that St Thomas's was generally in good shape. The drains at the back of the church had been replaced; choir toilets replastered; and Peter had organised repairs to the underfloor heating in the Cobbett Room. The fire alarm panel had been replaced and all boilers serviced.

Peter Neukom reported that the flat roof had been temporarily fixed but that more work to fix leaks long-term would be needed.

At St Martin's the boundary fence needs replacing and consideration was being given to the refurbishment of the toilets.

Brambleton Hall was in good condition; Michèle reported that a member of the boxing club had repainted the stage area following the nursery's move out, and that Keith Newman continued to dedicate significant time and effort to the hall.

9. Safeguarding

The vicar thanked Ruth Moore for her work as Parish Safeguarding Officer and noted that the new PCC would adopt the parish safeguarding arrangements – notified also to the APCM – at its first meeting.

10. AOB – None.

11. The meeting ended with the Grace

Signed

Date