

27th April APCM 2023

Present

Rachel Snow
George Atkinson-Clark
Richard Langford
David Knapman
Judith Knapman
Debbie Galliford
Steve Apted
Jackie Stacey
Yvonne Mills
Paula Sawers
Pauline Adamson

John Adamson
Maurice Campbell
Fay Grech-Marguerat

Linda Cudjoe - Note taker

Apologies

Alison MacPherson
Ian and Jean Wayment
Ross Kennedy
Sarah Atkinson-Clark
Chris Langford

2. Minutes of APCM held April 2022

Minutes proposed by Debbie, seconded by Paula

Passed by all

Next steps

The distribution of APCM minutes and reports prior to the meeting to electoral roll members needs to be reviewed next year as a number of people had not received this. APCM minutes from 2022 and all the reports were posted on the website and printed copies left at the back of the church for review however it appears not everyone had access to a set.

3. Election of PCC members

Fay – All in favour

Jackie Stacey – All in favour

PCC members retiring by rotation:

David Knapman retiring by rotation and standing again – approved Serving 2023-2026

Paula Sawers retiring by rotation and standing again – approved Serving 2023-2026

Paula and David have been voted in

David Knapman voted in to continue serving as treasurer.

Pauline retiring from PCC – Rachel thanked Pauline for her many years of service.

Linda retiring as PCC secretary – Rachel thanked Linda for her work in this role.

Next steps

PCC secretary required by next PCC meeting

Deanery representative required

4. Finance

David reported the financial report up to Dec 31st 2022. Presentation outlined below:

1. The purpose of this report today is to enable the Annual financial report and accounts for the year to 31 December 2022 to be adopted by the APCM.
2. Whilst the accounts are not formally required to be prepared with the full statutory information, as a matter of good practice, they have been prepared on an accruals basis, in line with the relevant accounting and legal requirements for Charities.

3. I usually report on the PCC's financial controls and to keep this brief, the controls remain more or less the same as in previous years, save that the pre counting of cash is returning as plate collections are re-established. Inevitably trust is an important part of the control element. As I have said before, you are very welcome to inspect the books and records!

All payments are made online, initiated by me and authorised by either Pippa Wilkinson, George Atkinson-Clark, or Steve Apted. Effectively 2 signatures for all payments.

4. Resume of accounts:

Page 1 sets out the Aims and Mission of St Mary's; Structure, Governance & Management and Membership of the PCC.

Pages 2 to 7 forms the PCC report covering Committees, Church attendance and the Electoral Roll; The PCC's Objectives and Activities & Achievements; Mission and Evangelism; Risk Policies; the main activities of the Fabric Committee; the financial review and aims and finally details of the PCC's Reserves and Investment policies. Our reserves policy remains unchanged. The report reflects the conditions under which St Mary's is working, as we emerge from the vacancy and look forward to working with Rachel.

Page 8 is the Examiner's report and Tim Gage, a qualified Chartered Accountant, has given the accounts a clean report.

Page 9 sets out the Statement of Financial activities, in other words the income and expenditure for the year, culminating in a small surplus of £1,293. The unrestricted funds, which in the main deal with the day to day running of the church, report a surplus of £6,821, whilst deficits arise in restricted and endowment funds to reduce the surplus to £1,293. The Restricted funds can only be spent on their intended projects, and the endowment funds are not ours to spend except for using the income on the upkeep of the graveyard.

Page 10 is the Balance Sheet showing the assets and liabilities of the PCC which at the end of the year disclosed £76,379 of net assets, which includes unrestricted and restricted funds. Note 6 to the accounts shows the allocation of these funds.

The majority of the assets are represented by bank deposit accounts.

Pages 11 to 13 contain the detailed accounting policies used in preparing these accounts.

Pages 14 and 15 contain further notes backing up information in the Statement of Financial Activity on page 9

Pages 16 & 17 disclose further information as required and support to the Balance Sheet.

Pages 17 & 18 show detailed information of the movements on all the funds managed by PCC.

Now for a few other points of information and then I can ask for questions:

5. Looking to the future, the PCC has approved a conservative deficit budget for 2023, which would reduce our funds by about £16,500 if it came to fruition.

Why such a hefty anticipated deficit? We face an enormous challenge in paying for our new power costs (as we all do) in 2023 and 2024. Our power costs would normally have been in the region of £4,500, but we had to take out new contracts on 9th January 2023 and we are now faced with these costs rising to around £19,000 per annum until 30th September 2024. If the results for 2023 match the budget, then this will make a large dent in our reserves, on which we rely to show that our financial position is strong. Clearly, we cannot withstand ongoing financial dents of that magnitude. I am not disheartened by this challenge! St Mary's has faced challenges before and so when the going gets tough, the tough get going! We can all start by praying that we are able to attract fresh financial support to beat this challenge, to keep our finances strong.

St Mary's has been superbly supported during 2022 by our standing order and other donors and continuing such financial support is vital to St Mary's economic continuity.

As you know, Woburn PCC is registered as a separate charity, No. 1183236. Our accounts have been filed at St Albans Diocese and their finance return completed.

After this meeting, the accounts for 2022 will be filed with the Charity Commission and the annual return will be completed and filed as well. These are some of the disciplines we have to follow.

6. This is the PCC's opportunity to very warmly thank our donors for all their support whether it is by small or large sums and particularly to those who generously continue to fund St Mary's by standing orders. This support is essential and St Mary's is blessed by your financial support; thank you very much indeed. It has enabled us to continue paying our Parish Share in full, which in turn enables the Diocese to pay for our Rector.
If anyone would like to start a standing order, please have a word with the churchwardens or me, and we shall be happy to help with the arrangements.
7. The PCC is pleased to recommend to the APCM the adoption of these Statutory accounts for the year to 31.12.2022, but before I propose the adoption of these accounts, I am happy to take questions.
8. If there are no (further) questions, then I propose that the report and accounts for the year to 31. Dec 2022 be adopted by the APCM.

David proposed that the accounts are adopted by the APCM. This was seconded by Pauline. Passed unanimously

David proposed that Tim Gage is reappointed as examiner of the accounts. Seconded by Rich Langford and passed by all

5. Electoral roll report

John Adam presented the status of electoral roll:

Total of 68 people on electoral roll
20 in parish
48 out of parish
2 deletions(1 in parish, 1 out of parish
1 addition from parish

6. Safeguarding report

Paula Sawers presented the safeguarding report

She reported that she attended a safe guarding course and realised that there is a lot more that she needs to be doing with regards to safeguarding. Rachel and Paula have a meeting scheduled to update notices and address what needs to be done now there is a new incumbent in post.

However, DBS checks and safeguarding training has been completed by everyone who requires it, which is excellent.

She indicated that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that all new members of the PCC are required to complete the online safeguarding course and as well as a DBS check. She will continue to check on DBS requirements and role descriptors for roles in the church.

7. Other reports

Rachel invited the APCM to ask questions or highlight any areas of importance. She referred to the youth ministry report and made the point that St Mary's goes against the trend of falling numbers in youth and children's ministry. This was testament to the hard work of the youth leaders ably led by Fay and Matt, and the investment of the church in paying for a youth / children's worker. Rachel also asked the APCM to continue to pay for this ministry in our church.

8. Church Warden's report

George recounted last year's APCM when church wardens contemplated the difficulties that lay ahead resulting from the impending vacancy due to complexities of finding an appropriate person prepared to take on the challenge.

George was pleased to report that with the support and prayers of the church the wardens got us through the period with the feeling that they had the support of the congregation.

George reported that all services were covered in the period of vacancy and thanked and commended Steve Apted for his ability to find vicars to cover every single service in the period. He also acknowledged the input of Anne Barker and the consistency and continuity she gave by being here to support 2 Sundays a month through the vacancy.

George reported that we welcomed some new people to St Mary's in the period of vacancy and made the point that this is very rare in interregnum.

George thanked Rachel for accepting the offer of incumbency in St Mary's and reported that services have remained unchanged in the last 2 years. He also mentioned the monthly prayer meeting led by Steve Apted.

Anne Turner has resumed her leadership of the prayer team, Fay continues to lead the youth and Rich as ever continues to recruit people including his family to join the worship group.

George thanked the volunteers who ensure flowers, teas and coffees and also those who keep the church clean on a regular basis.

Generally looking over the last year, George reported that the church family stayed united. He handed the future over to Rachel as our new incumbent

9. Report of Rachel Snow, Rector

Rachel acknowledged the note of acknowledgement David and George have passed to all who have helped keep the church going. She also wanted to thank everyone for their service during the vacancy.

She expressed her thanks to , recognising she has gone over and above her call of duty and working hours during the vacancy, stepping up to cover jobs previously done by Steve Nuth. She has also been a real support to Rachel in her first few weeks here. They are enjoying working together. Rachel also wanted to thank Fay, who gives a huge amount to the church above her paid hours.

Rachel paid tribute to Steve Nuth for the foundation he laid and believes that she is enjoying the fruit of his labour of 19 years.

Rachel gave thanks to God for sustaining St Mary's in the vacancy. She invited the APCM to stop and thank the Lord for his faithfulness and care for them over this season.

Rachel said she is not here in week 5 to set out a new path. She mentioned that the MAP (mission action plan) will be reviewed in time but that she shares the current vision of St Mary's.

Rachel mentioned the diocesan run LYCIG (leading your church into growth) course that will be happening next September 2024. She also said that she is keen to run an Alpha course in September and will communicate the date in the near future.

The finances of church remain a concern with the escalating utilities cost. The estimated heating bill means that if the level of giving continues at the current level, we would draw very heavily into our reserves and said that she would be sharing the challenges with the church family. She would be preaching on the subject of giving and would write a letter to people on the church electoral roll asking for people to consider their level of giving.

There will be a meeting on 18th May to discuss ideas for fundraising for the church. The hope is to have one fund raising activity in 2023 and another in 2024. The objective will be to give 50% of funds raised to the church and the remaining 50% to a named charity.

There has been a request to share church finances regularly with the church with respect to the challenges we face.

Rachel proposed that this is done quarterly. St Mary's gives 10% of income to charity and noted that it is important to make the congregation aware of this giving too.

Rachel clarified the position of the Church of England on same sex marriage in the church. The canon laws have not changed, neither has there been any revision of church doctrines on this matter. Rachel urged the APCM to work towards unity, within the church and across the Church of England, continuing to love each other and work together – we have more in common than the theological points that we disagree on. Her focus for the church family is to love the lost and to keep sharing the message of Jesus as our core aim. This will be her focus for Alpha.

Rachel believes that her role as a priest is that she is there to support people to release their gifts rather than her trying to do everything herself. She does not want to be the bottleneck to growth, and therefore is commending St Mary's continue as we are, with a host of people using their gifts and playing their part towards the common goal. She impressed that we all appreciate each other's different gifts and grow and thrive as we continue to harness each other's strengths.

She acknowledged that small groups are important in maintaining growth of our church family, offering pastoral care, discipleship and practical support.

She gave examples of the work that lay people can do – home communion visitors, pastoral visiting, teams to take school assemblies etc. and is keen to see these established.

She closed with a prayer for people to be released and grow in their gifts for the church family.

10. AOB

John referred to George's message where he said there were new people in the church and encouraged that they are encouraged to register to be on the electoral register

John also indicated that he was prepared to relinquish the role of electoral register gradually as support to whoever would take over

Meeting ended at 20.37 with the Grace

Next meeting 25th April 2024