

MINUTES OF GREAT BRICKHILL ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING,

HELD IN THE CHURCH ON THURSDAY 28th JULY 2021 AT 7.30pm.

Attached to these Minutes are the 2021 Warden's Report, Report on Coronavirus and a Report on the New Facilities. These are available as a PDF file on the website on the following page:-

<https://brickhillchurches.org.uk/great-brickhill/annual-church-meeting/annua-meeting-2021/>

The Reverend John Waller took the chair.

The Rector opened the meeting with prayer, and welcomed all those attending, adding that this was the second year that the meeting has had to be postponed but hopefully, it will be back to April/May next year.

PART I: THE ANNUAL VESTRY MEETING

ELECTION OF THE CHURCH WARDENS:

The current Warden, Julia Turner, was willing to seek re-election. Her nomination was proposed by Phillipa Cook and seconded by Janet Prichard. Julia Turner was duly elected.

The Rector noted thanks on behalf of all present to Julia Turner for her service over the year and for her willingness to stand again.

PART II: THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

APOLOGIES had been received from Jane Pritchard.

An Attendance Sheet was circulated. A total of 9 parishioners were in attendance.

MINUTES OF THE LAST ANNUAL MEETING HELD ON 1st OCTOBER 2020

The Minutes of the previous Annual Meeting had been made available in advance. There was no requirement to formally approve these Minutes.

ELECTIONS:

Up to six Members of the PCC.

The Rector informed the Meeting that the number of PCC members allowed for the size of our Electoral Roll is 6. At the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in 2004 provision was made for the annual appointment of representatives on the PCC. There is also facility for two people to be co-opted on to the PCC during the year if there is good reason to add more people.

The Rector thanked the current members of the PCC for their contribution over the last twelve months; they were all willing to stand again:- Phillipa Cook, Margretta Smith and Joy Wilson. An additional nomination had been received – Clare Hankins-Lewis. With only four nominations, no vote was required and all four were appointed by a show of hands.

The Treasurer, Neil Cook, would be co-opted on to the PCC at the first meeting after the Annual Meeting. One other person could be co-opted at any point during the year.

The Rector noted that the ex-officio members of the PCC are himself as incumbent, Julia Turner as Warden and Jeremy Hopkinson as LLM.

Deanery Synod Representative.

There is a vacancy for this position - the post can be filled at any time. Jeremy Hopkinson serves on the Deanery Synod as Treasurer.

Appointment of Independent Examiner for 2021.

The Treasurer said that David Beatty had again acted as Independent Examiner for this year and was willing to continue for the 2021 Accounts. Proposed by Joy Wilson and seconded by Jeremy Hopkinson, Mr. Beatty was duly appointed as Independent Examiner for 2021. The Rector asked the Treasurer to thank David Beatty on our behalf.

ELECTORAL ROLL:

Jeremy Hopkinson reported that the current number of people on the Electoral Roll is 39, of whom 5 were not resident in the parish. These figures would be passed to the Diocese.

The Rector said that earlier in the year we had lost Celia Hall who had contributed to church life in many ways including the Plant Fayre and she would be greatly missed.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE PARISH

The Rector referred to the Annual Report, which recorded details of activities up to the end of 2020. The last year had again been badly affected by Covid 19. Updates are given on various topics later in the agenda.

The Rector referred to the section in the Annual Report "Policy Documents". The annual Safeguarding report had taken place in November – for the year to 31st October the report is a "nil report" and no safeguarding incidents have been reported since then.

TREASURER'S REPORT INCL. ANNUAL REPORT:

Copies of the Annual Report and Accounts had been available via the website in advance of the Meeting. The Treasurer, Neil Cook, presented the financial statements for the year to 31st December 2020. He referred to the "Church Finances for 2020" section in the Annual Report and noted the major impact of the pandemic on the church finances – very few services and no fund-raising events. Of the £25k Parish Share due to be paid to the Diocese, only £11k was paid and even that resulted in a deficit for the year £2,671.

With regard to the difficulty in paying the full amount of the Parish Share, the Treasurer said that the other three churches in the Benefice had been persuaded to pay some of our Share, which would mean a reduction in 2021 of £3k – the amount due will be £22k but we may not be able to pay much more than half of that. Some regular givers have continued to contribute even when there were no services, the regular costs still have to be paid for insurance, heating etc.

The Rector said that there are discussions further afield about parishes not being able to pay their Parish Share, particularly in this part of the Diocese. We were very unfortunate that our main fund-raising events were not possible, the Plant Fayre and Snowdrop Walks. Also, we have lost some regular, generous givers. The national press has reported the difficulty for churches paying their Parish Share. The matter will continue to be discussed at PCC meetings.

The Annual Report and Accounts were adopted as one single document - proposed by Jeremy Hokinson and seconded by Joy Wilson. All were in favour of the adoption of the report.

The Rector thanked Neil Cook for the preparation of the Accounts and for his ongoing work as Treasurer.

WARDEN'S REPORT ON THE CHURCH BUILDING AND ITS FABRIC:

Julia Turner gave her Warden's report for the year – see separate file.

The Rector thanked Julia for all her hard work through the year.

DEANERY SYNOD REPORT:

The Rector referred to the Deanery Synod section of the Annual Report detailing the proceedings through the year of the Deanery Synod. There was very little to report - due to the pandemic, there had been no Deanery Synod meetings.

OTHER MATTERS OF PAROCHIAL OR GENERAL CHURCH INTEREST:

Two separate reports are attached relating to this item:

i). Coronavirus Information:

The Rector read the report detailing the effects of the pandemic. He thanked those who had helped with the cleaning etc during the difficult time. The guidance has now changed and it is a local decision which restrictions to recommend. Congregational singing is now allowed and a few more restrictions will be relaxed in the coming weeks when everyone is comfortable with what is in place.

The church can now be open – when the building work is finished the church will return to being open daily.

ii). Report on New Facilities:

Following on from the Warden's report, Julia Turner read out a report sent by Gill Wilson, the Project Coordinator. The Rector read a detailed report of progress on the work – both these reports are attached to the Minutes.

The Rector added that as well as the facilities, we now have the new path and fibre optic broadband. A grant covered the cost of the installation of the wi-fi and two years' monthly charges. This will allow for any funerals or weddings to be livestreamed. With the additional facilities the school and others will be making more use of the church.

REFLECTION FROM THE RECTOR:

The Rector gave a short reflection on a single verse from Matthew's gospel, a parable about "New treasures as well as old" Chapter 13 verse 52.

'He said to them, "Therefore every teacher of the law who has become a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his storeroom new treasures as well as old."

Look at what is still good and what is it time to give up? In the last year we have learnt new things and words like "Zoom" and "livestream". This has opened up new possibilities – what will we go back to and carry on with, and what shall we let go of".

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

Sir David Duncombe gave thanks for the obvious amount of work that had gone on in the last year, to look after the church and keep it going.

The Reverend John Waller thanked everyone for attending and the meeting concluded with Compline at 8.15pm.