

Parish of Cirencester with Watermoor and St Lawrence Chesterton

**Minutes of the Parochial Church Council's Special meeting held at the Parish Centre at 7.30pm
on 27th March 2018**

Present: Mr P Cottey (Chair), Mr J Bathurst (Hon Treasurer), Mr H Gray (Hon Sec), Rev H Gilbert, Mr J Light, Mrs S Beck, Mr M Stratton, Mr H Kennard, Mrs D Miller, Mr D Henson, Mr R Williams, Mrs J Godsell, Mrs E Ellis, Mrs B Springate, Mrs M Austin, Miss A Anderson

1. Mr Cottey opened the meeting with **prayer**.

2. **Apologies for Absence** had been received from: Revd K Richardson, Revd J Wilson, Mr M Radford, Ms C Luck, Mr D Henson, Mrs J Henson, Mr J Lawrence, Mr S Smith, Dr R Dolton, Miss P Phillips, Mrs J Ivison, Mr R Marlowe, Mrs H Hammond

3. **Accounts.** Draft copies of the accounts had been circulated to members prior to the meeting. Mr Cottey said that when the new incumbent had been appointed, it was his intention to recommend an annual meeting in March to adopt the accounts ready for presentation at the APCM. Mr Bathurst referred to various sections of the accounts document and explained some aspects of the introductory first seven pages. He continued by referring to Page 8 which needed an additional detail of the quinquennial inspection of HTW and STL. The date for the inspection of StJB was not known by those present but it may be that all three churches would be inspected at the same time. This will be checked.

On Page 11 the statistics show that investments have done well during the year. This year there is an unrestricted loss of c. £9000, which is an improvement on the previous year but, as trustees, we have an obligation to reduce this deficit. The recommendation is to improve Planned Giving rather than try to cut essential expenditure. The continuing loss is unsustainable and, Mr Bathurst emphasised, all PCC members have a responsibility to address this imbalance.

Page 12. We have sustained cash levels quite well. Page 16 and onwards: a couple of errors needed correction. Page 20 showed how the investments have been allocated.

Mr Bathurst congratulated the Corner Stone (Church Bookshop) which has made a good profit this year and money has been repaid to the PCC. As a company, it could well have repaid its debt in next three years.

Related Party Transactions. There was discussion as to what remuneration figures should be disclosed, with regard to individual trustees who have received payments from the PCC. Mr Cottey pointed out that vergers attending funerals receive remuneration from the funeral directors, so there was no cost to the PCC as such. Mr Stratton responded that the fees paid came into the PCC accounts and were then paid out by the Charity, so the payment should be disclosed. Mr Cottey advised that a note be added to show that there was no actual cost to the Charity.

Mr Cottey recommended Clergy expenses should also be included since these were also paid from the accounts. Clergy were trustees of the PCC and so any expenses paid to them should also be disclosed.

Mention was made of the Sylvanus Lysons Trust which supported the Youth and Children's work.

Members were invited to make any comments on the draft accounts and some slight amendments and corrections were suggested.

Fr Howard asked that Revd J Wilson's title was amended to 'Assistant Curate (From July)' and Mr Light asked that Revd Penny Light be removed from the Associate Priest role as she has now 'retired with permission to officiate'.

Mrs Beck proposed, and Mr Light seconded, that the accounts, with the slight modifications, were accepted and published for the APCM. This was approved unanimously.

Mr Cottey thanked Mr Bathurst for all the hard work he had put in to ready the accounts for publication.

4. General Data Protection Regulations

Mr Gray introduced the subject. He referred to two documents circulated previously; the Diocesan's Brief Guide to PCC Members and also to a sheet of what the GDPR group had done so far. He recommended we followed the guidance from the Diocese who had posted detailed advice, templates and documents on their website. Miss Anderson added that she had attended a training day at Cheltenham. The main recommendation is not to panic as all parishes are working on this. Our main priority is to hold a data audit to judge how information we hold on individuals is currently handled and how the GDPR will impact on this.

Once we have decided how we manage this we then create our parish policy. Fr Howard emphasised that we need to be certain as to how the legal GDPR requirements will affect us and then formulate our action plan. Mr Cottey felt that as long as we had our intentions clear and policy formulated by 25th May, then no one could criticise and that we were well on the way to achieving this. There was some discussion at this point as to when exactly we should be renewing our electoral roll and how this might dovetail with the GDPR.

Mr Cottey strongly recommended that any group emails go out under blind copy so that other people's emails are not published without their permission.

Fr Howard explained that the GDPR group was exploring methods to store contact data efficiently. There were various ways for doing that with different costing implications. The Diocese was recommending G-Suite (free) which is a spreadsheet set up with sharing in mind. Individuals can access group names within this for communication and rota purposes. Or we consider a Church Management System which could be set up for us and comply with GDPR conditions (£30-£40 per month) and could be an efficient investment; or an active data management system which the youth officers are using currently. We will consider the best approach later when all the slightly varying advice we are receiving has been finalised.

It was agreed to have GDPR as an agenda item for the coming PCC meetings so we can track progress.

5. **Significant Dates:** The Vestry Meeting is at 11.30am on Sunday 22nd April in the Parish Church for election of Churchwardens. The APCM will follow at 12 noon when PCC members will be elected. There will be no 10am/10.30am services at the other churches. It was noted that Mr Radford has resigned from the PCC so there will be a vacancy for a new member for a one year period. Also Mr Light had completed his three year term of office so there is a vacancy for someone to represent St Lawrence. Mr Cottey thanked Mr Light for his service to the PCC during his time as trustee.

The next full PCC meeting is on Wed. 16th May in the Parish Centre at 7.45pm.

Interview Day for a new incumbent is on Friday 20th April and, as last time, all PCC members are invited to lunch on that day. Time to be advised.

In answer to a question from Mr Bathurst, Mr Cottey outlined how the APCM would be run, that any parishioners could attend the Vestry meeting but only those on the electoral roll could vote at the APCM. Mr Cottey confirmed that applicants for vacancies to the PCC need to be proposed and seconded and that the Deanery Synod representatives would continue, as they were re-elected last year and serve for three years. He continued to point out that after three years, elected members need to take a year's gap before they can be re-elected. He also outlined the ruling on the six-year rule for Churchwardens. A warden may be in post for six years but must then take a gap of two years before re-election. Over the last years the meeting has always voted to set aside this rule. Mr Cottey felt that while we are in vacancy we should maintain continuity. This rule only applies to the Parish Wardens, not the 'Deputy' wardens at HTW and StL. He will propose to set aside the six-year rule for the sake of continuity. Fr Howard pointed out that, following legal advice, the proposals made at the last APCM are not binding for this APCM and that the decision on the 6 year rule must be taken each year and last just for the ensuing twelve months.

He also stated that should there not be a suitable candidate for the incumbency, then the interview panel will not be making an appointment, so continuity would be vital in that situation.

Mrs Godsell thanked Mr Cottey for his chairmanship over the last year since Fr Leonard's departure, and Mr Gray for his work as Secretary to the PCC. The meeting finished with the Grace at 8.30pm.