

**PARISH OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY
SOUTHWELL**

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

held in the Nave on

Tuesday 27th April 2021

MINUTES

Present: the Dean (Chair), the Precentor, Mrs Andrea Pritchard, Mr Peter Gibbins, Col. Tim Richmond, Mr Robert Ridgwell, Mrs Vicky Thorpe, Mr Guy Turner (APCM Clerk) and 30 Members of the Electoral Roll

1. The Dean opened the meeting with prayer, and welcomed everyone.
2. **Apologies for absence** were received from John and Vicki Loughton, Jenny Mellors, Elizabeth Murdoch, and Peter and Ann van de Kastele
3. **Minutes** of the Annual Meeting of Parishioners 2020 held on October 18th (later in the year because of lock down), previously made available with the Annual Report, were agreed, and signed as a true record by the Dean. Proposer Mr Andrew Bates, seconder Mr Michael Ward-Fitches.
4. **Election of Churchwardens 2021-2022**

The Dean expressed her gratitude for the reliability, grace and patience with which the churchwardens had served the Minster through all the difficulties and extra preparations of the pandemic.

The following people were elected unopposed:

Dean's Churchwarden – Mr Andrew Bates and Mrs Jean Jackson

People's Churchwarden – Mrs Kathy Hocking and Ms Meg Maunder (both proposed by Mr Andrew Bates, and Seconded by Mr David Shannon)

Deputy Wardens – Mr David Shannon and Mr Jamie Bostock

5. **Appointment of Auditors**

It was reported that BHP continue to serve the Minster well, and it was agreed that they should continue to act as auditors. The Dean commented that

the auditors had been hugely impressed with the way the Finance Office had managed the complexities of the accounts in this unusual year.

6. Report of the Electoral Role Officer

Mr Peter Gibbins reported that the number on the Electoral Role at the end of 2020 was 230. This is slightly down, but some growth was expected as we come out of pandemic restrictions. The Dean thanked Mr Gibbins for his work as Electoral Role Officer.

7. The Audited Accounts for 2020

Col Tim Richmond, Chair of the Finance Committee reported on the accounts, which had been audited and approved by Chapter. The summary and full accounts were available at the meeting, and on the Minster website.

The pandemic had caused an inevitable downturn in income, but this had been offset by the Minster's award from the Cultural Recovery Fund.

There are healthy reserves, but much of this is linked to property.

The current forecast is a deficit of £70,000, but it is anticipated that this will be mitigated as the pandemic conditions lift. If we get to pre-pandemic income then a break-even is expected.

Col Richmond thanked Mrs Andrea Pritchard and Mrs Adele Poulson for all their work.

8. The Annual Report

The detailed report (black and white) and the glossier 'outward facing' version (in colour) were both received without question or comment. The Dean commented on how much development and creativity there had been in so many areas of the Minster Community, despite the difficulties of the pandemic.

9. The Report of the Deanery Synod Representatives

Mr Robert Ridgwell and Mr Jamie Bostock are our representatives, and Mr Ridgwell gave a report.

Newark and Southwell Deanery Synod is an important n mutually supportive discussion forum and support group. It has met twice on Zoom since the last (October) APCM. It is an important channel of communications for information from the Diocese, particularly is driving forward Mission – ‘Growing Disciples’, and it has a function in deciding Parish Share – though this does not of course directly affect the Minster.

The Dean thanked Mr Ridgwell and Mr Bostock for their work on this.

10. Safeguarding

The Minster Safeguarding Officer, Mrs Vicky Thorpe, presented her report.

Safeguarding remains at the forefront of the Minster’s agenda, despite the pandemic. Our policy is constantly under review: the full policy, together with a summary, is on the Minster website, and Mrs Thorpe or the Dean are always glad to answer questions.

Our relationship with the Diocesan Safeguarding team is developing to ensure best practice, and Diocesan training of our leaders has been well received.

Safeguarding is not, of course, solely concerned with child protection.

The C of E online safeguarding awareness training is available to everyone – simply ask Mrs Thorpe for a log-in in order to take the training yourself.

We are working on a new, robust, recording system, tracking all concerns and actions. This will be a welcome help to our procedures.

There is an audit of our Safeguarding procedures due in 2021 (postponed from 2020)

The Dean expressed warm appreciation of Mrs Thorpe’s very capable work.

11. Dean’s Remarks

2020 was a unique and spiritually exhausting year which had an extraordinary impact – we must celebrate the great achievements of both staff

and volunteers in this difficult time, not least relocating their work to home, and learning to function through Zoom and Teams. Everyone kept going.

Regular worship has been maintained, and online and recorded worship has played an unprecedented part in this.

It is a great tribute to the Vergers, Minster Centre Staff and Volunteers that we have continued to function, despite all the extra effort needed to keep us all safe, while strengthening our work with the Diocese, County and City.

Our creative imaginations have been unlocked while working out how to manage worship socially distanced, on-line and in some cases outdoors.

The Leave Project is progressing well. Crofts, who are the main on-site contractor, should be off site by the end of May. Most work will be finished in time to start drawing people in in the Autumn.

Unfortunately, the planned contractor for the Outdoor Learning Centre has just let us know that he is unable to proceed, which is a set-back.

The on-line talks related to the Leaves Project have had a huge following and can all still be seen on the website.

Sacrista Prebend's new Warden, Revd Dr Michele Hampson, has exciting new plans, and we look forward to being able to open the house and begin development.

The 'New Cathedrals Measure', which has recently received royal assent, means we have to review our constitution, statutes and governance. We have three years to implement the necessary changes, which will give us clearer structures, and greater accountability – we will now be accountable to the Charities Commission as well as to church authorities. All this will mean a lot of work.

Many thanks to all Chapter Members who have continued doing a great job in these difficult times, and particularly to Col Tim Richmond for all he has done with Business and Finance. He is now stepping down from Chapter along with Sean Boney and Richard Vigar. Many thanks to all of them for their invaluable work.

In line with the New Cathedrals Measure, and Nominations Committee has been looking after the process of recruiting new members to Chapter, and there should be news about this soon.

Thanks also to the Clergy team, especially those working on pastoral issues in Lockdown.

It has not been possible to progress the recruitment of the new Residentiary Canon during the pandemic, but it is now hoped to move this forward in order to have someone in post during the Autumn. It is planned that the new Canon will particularly work on Mission, pastoral matters and the moves to make the Minster an Eco-Cathedral.

We look to the future cautiously and hopefully, as we re-gather as a worshipping community. The choristers are now back into a regular pattern of singing and everyone is asked to give them all possible encouragement.

While we lament what has been lost during the pandemic, we should move forward in an atmosphere of hope – this theme will be reflected by the ‘Leaves of the Trees’ exhibit from May 11th.

There are many challenges – the environmental crisis, racial inequality, social and economic worries – how do we respond?

Thank you for being part of the journey.

At the end of the Dean’s remarks, Mr Michael Ward-Fitches proposed a vote of thanks to the Dean and the Precentor for all they have done to lead the Minster community through some difficult times. This was well received by all present.

The meeting closed with the Grace.

12. Date of next meeting: Tuesday 26th April 2022, 7.30pm, the State Chamber, Archbishop’s Palace