

SALISBURY CATHEDRAL COMMUNITY FORUM

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
held on Monday 4 October 2021
at 18.30pm via Zoom

COMMUNITY AGM
DRAFT MINUTES October 4, 2021

Approximately forty people met online for the AGM of the Community on Monday 4 October.

Apologies were received from two Forum members, Ros Hepplewhite and Zoe Fletcher.

1. The Dean, Nicholas Papadopoulos, opened the meeting with prayer
2. Interim Chair, Colin Smith, welcomed him and those attending. He introduced himself briefly, said that he hoped people had already accessed the relevant papers on the website, and sought permission to record the proceedings, which was not opposed. He asked if the minutes published were a true record of events last year. These were accepted and the Secretary was thanked.

There were no matters arising.

3. Forum Membership - Canon Robert Titley began by thanking Patrick Thomas for his legal advice in this matter and said that he would not be asking for questions because the Dean would speak to this later in the meeting.

Some of you may know the Cathedrals' Measure 2021 is now law. It requires Cathedral Chapters in England, and with modifications for Christ Church Oxford, to implement its requirements for revision of a Cathedral's Constitution and Governance. This will take time as its provisions are complex.

One change which will come from the Measure, but still at an uncertain date, is the discontinuance of the Community Forum as it presently exists; with decisions also to be made about any replacement.

In the circumstances, the Forum recommended Chapter to exercise its power under the Forum Constitution to extend the time in office of a retiring Member, Sylvia Roseaman, until next year's AGM or the earlier end of the Forum.

Chapter has agreed to that recommendation, and, for the same reason, one for continuing to keep unfilled the two vacancies which arose last year.

4. **Chairman's Report** Dame Rosemary Spencer

Original text provided

As Forum members know, Colin Smith took over as Chairman of the Community Forum last month, when I stepped down, as mobility problems had slowed me down in more ways than one! I remain a member of the Forum. Colin has asked me to present the Chairman's report for the last 12 months, covering my time in the Chair.

My first comment is that the future of the Cathedral Community Forum, representing the Cathedral Community, is uncertain. It will be part of the review of the Cathedral's governance, to bring it into line with the new Cathedrals Measure.

This time last year, Cathedral services and other activities were severely constrained. New ways of reaching the congregation and people well beyond it through YouTube and Zoom were much appreciated by those with internet access. But despite the innovations and everyone's efforts it was difficult to maintain the community spirit which is such an important part of the cathedral's life, and which it is the Forum's aim to promote. In the course of this year, great progress has been made in getting back to something like normality, with Sunday services now back to the pre-Covid pattern, and coffee in the cloisters after the 10.30 Eucharist. It is hugely encouraging that we can look forward to 'Darkness to Light' again this year.

As you probably know, some of the Covid innovations including live-streaming of major services are being maintained, so that the Cathedral's outreach can continue. And talks on Zoom have proved to be a considerable success. The use of the Cathedral as a vaccination centre, with music by David Halls and John Challenger, was hugely popular with local people, and put the Cathedral on the map in Britain and internationally.

As the situation has evolved, the Community Forum has kept closely in touch with developments, as well as discussing regular business. The latter has included offertory amounts and charitable giving – on which more from Patrick Thomas shortly. It also included reports from the 3 Cathedral representatives who were elected to serve on Deanery Synod and became Forum members a year ago, keeping us in touch with other local churches. We have been considering how best to update and streamline the Community and Congregational Rolls and contact details. This is linked to another important issue which the Forum has kept under regular review: how to make it easier for the clergy to communicate with members of the congregation who are not able to attend Cathedral services and may not have access to the internet. But it looks as if the question of Rolls will need to await broader consideration of Cathedral governance in the light of the Cathedrals Measure.

Members of the Forum have been impressed by the way in which the Dean and Chapter have taken advantage of this quieter period in the Cathedral's life, with a reduction in the visitor flow, to construct a new entrance to the Consistory Court. This is visually a great improvement, as well as making access to the cathedral much easier and safer.

One of the outstanding achievements of this year has been A Rocha's Gold Eco-Church award to the Cathedral, after rigorous inspection and questioning by the A Rocha team. This is the first Gold Award to have been given to an English cathedral. The Forum has followed this closely. A small group of Close residents, with links to the Close Preservation Society, have worked with Canon Robert Titley to promote eco-friendly

practices in the Close, to complement the major achievement of installing solar panels on the cloister roof. Up to Oct 2 we have saved the equivalent of 11.5t of CO2 since the scheme's inception in July 2020 and about 9t over the last year.

At this point, I should like to thank Canon Robert most warmly for all he has done for the Cathedral community, and to facilitate the Forum's contact with the Dean and Chapter. As Chairman I have greatly valued him as an interlocutor. We will miss him very much when he leaves in January. I am sure I speak for all my Forum colleagues and others present this evening in wishing him and Caroline well in the next stage of their lives.

Finally, I should say to all our listeners that the Forum is **your** institution. Please do let its members know if you have comments or questions about Cathedral activities. The Forum has its own section on the cathedral website, with an email link. Now that coffee has been reinstated after the 10.30am service on Sundays, we hope that Forum members will wear their badges – please do approach us if you have issues to raise, or simply want to get to know us.

Now I hand back to Colin Smith, with all best wishes for his Chairmanship.

Colin thanked Dame Rosemary and said that it was a disappointment that she had been unable to continue as Chair. Those present applauded.

5. Treasurer's presentation - Finance report and Charitable Giving

Many of you may have taken the opportunity to read my Report, and accompanying Statement of Offertory Fund Income and Expenditure, which have been uploaded to the Community Forum page on the Cathedral website, in readiness for this meeting.

I will therefore restrict my remarks, if I may, to drawing attention to some of the key numbers and points which are covered in the Report and Statement.

- The Report examines the position for the Financial Year ending 31 March this year.
- Total Offertory income from all sources amounted £141,545 compared to the previous year total of just short of £225,000.
- That is a “headline” reduction from the previous year of nearly £83,500.
- It shows starkly the impact of the Covid pandemic, which was evident in reduced “on the day” giving on Sundays, Weekdays, Advent and Christmas.
- The Report gives the detailed breakdown for the different services and compares them with the previous year, but in summary, including Gift Aid recovery, the Sunday and Weekday collections were down by around £51,000; and Advent and Christmas were down by nearly £31,500.
- In all the “doom and gloom” the “stand out” Good News is the income figure of nearly £127,000 from Planned Giving - a small reduction of about £1,000 from the

previous year. That is, I suspect, more to do with changes in the donor base than the Pandemic.

- However, **the figures I have outline above show the significant benefit derived from Planned Giving and represents about 89% of the total Offertory fund income.**

Turning to Charitable Giving,

- Each year 5% of the Offertory Fund receipts is made available for distribution to Charities recommended by the Forum and approved by Chapter, who wished to maintain that approach despite the turndown in fortunes due to Covid.
- The Forum used the criteria and methodology mentioned in the Report, with a focus on charities providing benefits to communities or groups in the area of the Salisbury Diocese; with two being closely connected with Salisbury itself; Salisbury Food Bank and the Salisbury Women's Refuge.
- The sum available in the Report year was £7,077 so enabling the seven charities listed in the Finance Department statement to be supported with donations of £1,011 each.

In conclusion this Report makes clear not only the adverse impact of Covid-19 on Offertory Fund income, but the huge benefit accruing to the Offertory Fund from Planned Giving and associated Gift Aid recovery; 95% of which is retained for Cathedral purposes, with the remaining 5% considerably underpinning Chapter's ability to support local charities through its Charitable Giving Scheme.

There were no questions, and the Chair thanked the Treasurer for his report.

6. Ministry to Young People - Reverend Pete Atkinson

The Minor Canon for Young People began by talking briefly about the strange nature of the nineteen months he had been in post, falling as it had in a time of an unprecedented pandemic, and by describing some of the highlights despite COVID-19, across three discrete areas, schools, The Close, and the life of the Cathedral. The term 'young people' is a wide group primarily with school age children 5-17.

At the Cathedral School, Pete is a Christian presence, takes assemblies, consults with staff, runs lunchtime clubs and has the great joy of preparing young people for confirmation. He has also been visiting Wyvern St Edward's one day a week establishing a chaplaincy, and is dealing with up to 3000 youngsters and adults in all (staff, parents, grandparents etc), helping them to consider such topics as miscarriage, bullying, anger and violence, substance abuse, pornography, self harm, identity, and suicide, all of which have been raised, demonstrating a significant pastoral need. This is across all schools that he is connected with. Building relationships and meeting these young people where they are, enables the creation of an environment where faith can be explored.

In the Close, Pete has been spending time after the school day, engaging usually at least twice a week with youngsters using the open space and unlike his work in the two schools which have a specifically Christian context, this is what he calls 'detached outreach'. Often the groups present a range of responses, some of them voicing dissatisfaction with the establishment or government, and this can provide an opportunity to explore the subversive nature of Jesus. By developing conversation and breaking down barriers, Pete hopes to build relationships, hospitality, generosity and empathy, and is conducting surveys to establish what the young people want, which is usually safe space to hang out, especially during winter months, and ideally with power sockets. There is a youth cafe run with our Deanery partners and also visits to Marsh Close on Wednesday evenings.

Developing deeper links in the life of the Cathedral was made much more difficult by the restrictions of Covid, but a good deal has been achieved already, including family streamed services for Christmas and Easter, Pete 'hot seating' in local school visits, the junior and youth choir where he has been developing a cantor role in youth services, and the recruitment of youngsters as servers and assisting Trevor Branch in their training. Additionally, engagement in social action is being actively developed.

The Chair commented on how wonderful it was to have all this happening and Emily Oliver congratulated Pete on such 'amazing and courage

7. The Dean

The Dean opened by saying that it was nice to be with us all on Zoom, and quite like old times, though what he had to say might not be as much fun as Pete's contribution.

He began by describing some of the changes to Chapter: the appointment of Jonathan Leigh as a lay members, and the recent departure of Luke March, as well as the forthcoming departure of Canon Robert.

In matters of strategy & Governance, our original five year plan ends this year and we look now to the next five years and its new horizons but the new Cathedrals' Measure means that this is very much a 'work in progress'. It is a journey. The Key Performance Indicators are being drawn up but the staff have been extremely busy so the task is still ongoing.

Because of the unique history of our foundation, three values underpin what we do: liberty, creativity and eternity, and these are central to the gospel we preach.

Our mission is to deepen these three areas, and our objectives decided after engagement with all bodies

<u>Sharing our Life</u>	Outreach + Communication	Worshippers + Volunteers
<u>Resourcing our Life</u>	Broaden +Deepen our income base.	Visitor Economy is not enough
<u>Ordering our Life.</u>	Being more transparent	Being more accountable Being more comprehensible
<u>Discovering our Life.</u>	We are discovering our life in Christ and enabling this for others.	

The Cathedrals' Measure is now law and Salisbury is in the first tranche to put this fully into practice. Eventually, all cathedrals will be registered and regulated by the Charities Commission. The following are the implications:

- 1, Due diligence requirements which are extensive.
2. It ends the current Constitution and Statutes and means replacements to existing practices. Chapter alone will be the legal entity of the Cathedral (not the Council, or for the College of Canons and Chapter, thought to be too disparate to be effective) They will be in effect, the Trustees. The Cathedral Council is abolished; the college of Canons, no longer governmental. Something will replace the Forum. It may be an advisory body or bodies; it will probably look fairly similar, and the Dean asked his audience to consider who might be on this group, how many members would be ideal and asked that views be fed back to him.

The Dean concluded by saying that by next summer we should be Measure compliant.

He thanked the members of the Community Forum for serving beyond their original terms and coping with the difficulties and trials of the last two years and extended his gratitude especially to Dame Rosemary for the difficult last eighteen months and for her candour, clarity and warmth throughout.

Colin Smith thanked the Dean and invited questions. None were raised. He remarked that we were fortunate to be at the head of the queue, and he would canvass views and pass them on to the Dean, whom he thanked for his 'really helpful and encouraging words'.

There was no AOB and everyone was thanked.

The Dean closed the meeting in prayer at 8.10