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## **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Churches Together in Oxfordshire held via ZOOM on Monday, 25<sup>th</sup> April 2022 via ZOOM**

Those present: Revd. Jason St John Nicolle (Chair); Revd. John Anderson (Secretary); Chris Robins (Treasurer); David Hare (CEDO); Rev. Glyn Millington (URC Ecumenical Officer); and two others.

Apologies were received from: Rev. Clare Downing, (Moderator of the URC Wessex Synod); Rev. Canon Helen Cameron (Chair, Northampton Methodist District); Bishop Gavin Collins, Bishop of Dorchester; Rev. Steve Barber (Regional Minister, Southern Counties Baptist Association); Father Nick St. John (Roman Catholic Ecumenical Officer); Rev. Kate Harford, (Oxford Brookes Uni. Chaplaincy); Rev. Pauline Main (URC minister, retired); Rev. Ian Griffiths (Trinity LEP, Abingdon); Rev. Kevin Beer (CT Wallingford Area); Miranda St. John Nicole, Director of Christian Concern for One World.

1. The Chair opened the meeting with a welcome to everyone and then prayers.
2. The Minutes of the last A.G.M. had been circulated and were accepted by those present.
3. **The Treasurer's report – Chris Robins**
  - 3.1. The Treasurer had circulated his report, the 2021 accounts and the budget for next year. One denomination had taken slightly longer to offer their funding but this had been caused by a change of treasurer and resolved. Our reserves had again risen due to lack of expenditure due to the COVID restrictions and so the denominations had been offered a reduction in their contributions. Chris suggested that it was too early to judge what the situation would be next year.
  - 3.2. There being no questions the financial reports and budget were accepted by those present.
  - 3.3. The Chair thanked Chris Robins for all his hard work.
4. **County Officer's Report – David Hare**
  - 4.1. David gave a verbal report for the last twelve months. He was trying to re-establish links with church groups and offer his services, if he was required. In particular, he had been working with Miranda at Christian Concern for One World on the Ukraine refugee situation, looking to link together Christian groups offering accommodation and putting in place measures of care for those suffering physical, emotional and spiritual trauma.
  - 4.2. David told the meeting of the plans that he and Jason are drawing up to offer a "road show" in various locations in the county, looking to bring churches and church groups together for

the sharing of best practice and mutual encouragement. He felt that in some places churches were working more closely together than before the pandemic, but in other places resurrecting the ecumenical work was proving difficult.

- 4.3. The Chair asked David what had brought him joy and excitement in his ministry as CEDO. David responded by saying that seeing some churches working together and ministering in the pandemic, being relevant to the local in a local situation; in other words, being salt and light in their situation is what brought him joy.
- 4.4. The Chair then invited David to comment on the life of LEPs. David responded by saying he believed it was about being sensitive to the needs of LEPs, and offering his services if and when they were required.
- 4.5. There being no further questions from the meeting the Chair thanked David for his report and work.

## **5. Election of Officers**

- 5.1. The following were elected:
  - Revd. Jason St John Nicolle – Chair;
  - Revd. John Anderson - Secretary;
  - Chris Robins – Treasurer.
6. The Chair offered a reading from John 15, using the New English Bible translation, which was significant for him personally. He offered a short reflection, in that the work of Churches Together in Oxfordshire was to help all churches to dwell in the Vine, as branches, receiving the life of Christ, and thus being able to bear fruit. Ecumenism, working together, should be at the heart of Christian life.
7. Any Other Business – Hugh Brooman, as Treasurer of Churches Together in Banbury, made the meeting aware that the churches in Banbury gave a book to every child when they moved into secondary school. (The book is “It’s your move” published by Scripture Union.) The cost of providing these books has caused a significant drain on finances and Hugh asked if anyone knew of additional sources of funding. The Secretary thought that an appeal to the Northampton Methodist District Advance Fund was worth trying via the circuit; the chair said he would forward on any Anglican sources that he could discover.
8. The Chair closed the meeting with a prayer for St Mark’s day from the Book of Common Prayer followed by sharing of the Grace.