

## Minutes of the meeting held on 21.02.22 via Zoom at 7.30

### Present:

Revd Tony Rindl - Chair (TR)  
Revd Joshua Brocklesby (JB)  
Roger Courtney (RC)  
Clinton Dan-Jumbo (CDJ)  
Peter Dean (PD)  
Tilly Elliott (TE)  
Margaret Greenstreet (MG)  
Cathy Honeyman (CH)  
Abie Idris (AI)  
Alison Saunders (AS)

Minutes taken by AS.

- 1. Opening Prayer.** TR referred to Jill Bell's funeral that had been held earlier in the day saying that it had been good to see some friends from St. Mary's who have moved away. Reflecting on Jill he said that it was a reminder of who we are and what we are about because it reminded us of the hope and promise we have in Jesus and that his will and purposes reign supreme. Although we need to wrestle with issues concerning our finances and buildings etc, we shouldn't get bogged down in these matters and forget the hope we have and that we are brothers and sisters in Christ. Jill had battled her illness for many years, but was helped through it by her faith, Christian hope and the support of her church family. He then read I Thess. 4:13-18, the passage read at her funeral which concludes: "let us encourage one another with these words". TR then prayed asking God to help us to comprehend his goodness and his purposes so that we might flourish as a town centre church.
- 2. Apologies for Absence (or not present).** Jane Carter (JCa), Joanna Cooper (JCo), Annafrida Kadzura (AK), David Scourfield (DS).
- 3. Conflict of Interest.** As chair of trustees of the Watford Town Centre Chaplaincy, TR declared a conflict of interest in any discussions relating to WTCC and on account of

his relationship with Cath da Costa (CdaC), any matters concerning the Children and Families Worker.

4. **Approval of Minutes 17 January 2022.** Having made some amendments before circulation, TE proposed accepting them as a correct record, seconded by RC and agreed by all present.

5. **Matters Arising:**

**Register of interested parties.** PD has started to work on this as it needs to be in place for our annual report. He gave assurance that it would be in place in time for the next meeting.

**Repair of monitor and any other AV Issues.** PD reported that a meeting with DS and RC has been arranged for this Wednesday morning as requested at the January PCC. TR was concerned that neither he nor JB were aware of this meeting and felt strongly they should have been included. RC responded saying that this meeting is more concerned with the office IT but will also include the AV system if possible. It is a first discussion to take forward what was asked for in January, which will require further discussion. TR hoped Jacky Faria would be included at the Wednesday meeting as office manager. TR is very concerned about the programme of work for WiFi and the AV system in the church, not just moving the photocopier to the corridor and office IT arrangements. TR would like to get the programme of work underway as soon as possible and would like to be involved with JB at an early stage, using JB's expertise before he moves on. TR is looking for a user-friendly system to assist with leading worship using the technology to allow for live-streaming etc.

**Outside noticeboards.** No further progress

**Memorandum of Understanding and letting arrangement.** Two documents had been circulated prior to this meeting, the Memorandum of Understanding and Letting Agreement. TR said he hopes that the PCC can agree both. Acceptance of both was proposed by PD, seconded by MG and agreed by all present for recommendation to the trustees of WTCC.

**Safeguarding reporting and DBS.** TR understands from Jacky Faria (JF) our administrator that all members of the PCC now have a valid DBS or have started the process for applying for one. CH needs to arrange a meeting with JF to further her process. C1 training has been completed by PD, CD-J, AS, MG, DS. CH, TE and JCa, need to contact either JF or CdaC to arrange to do it online.

**First Aid boxes.** All church boxes have been updated by Liz Allan and Valeria King. Liz is organising stickers and labelling for these. She is still working on signage for where to find cleaning equipment.

**Waste Collection.** PD confirmed that we now have a food bin which is collected regularly along with the recycling. We are still in the process of checking whether the non-recycling bin is being collected every two weeks.

**Notices in the lounge.** Updating of safeguarding notices in the West End porch is underway. RC noted that there are still some out-of-date notices on the Church Centre notice boards. JB confirmed that this is still a work in progress.

## 6. Correspondence. None

## 7. Committee reports:

### a. Finance.

- Helen Baldwin (HB) has updated the December report as part of her preparation for handing over the accounts to the Independent Assessor (IA).
- PD said that there is no January report as HB has been too busy preparing the 2021 accounts ready for submission to the IA. HB has now handed over the accounts to AK but will be there to support her. The process of adding AK as a signatory on the Barclays account has still to be completed.
- Designated funds and reserves. In his report, PD has provided a link to a document from a Diocesan Training Workshop. Page 52 explains why designated funds cannot be counted as reserves. This principle is also stated in section 3:5 of the PCC accounting regulations. HB, an experienced bookkeeper, has worked very hard to present the accounts in line with these principles.
- PD reminded us that we are now near the limit of the sum required from our reserves policy, unless the PCC wishes to review it. He also reminded us that there is a backlog of work needed on Brightwell Road which may amount to approx. £30,000. This needs to be considered in our reserves policy.
- Designated funds. Having sought professional advice, PD confirmed that any money remaining in the Development Fund that is unrestricted needs to be transferred to the General Fund unless we have a resolution to use the money for a specific purpose. He also pointed out that as trustees we have a duty to use unrestricted money from legacies etc to further our purposes as soon as we are able. TR commended PD on reminding us about the need to set our goals and define our priorities and agreed that our decisions and resolutions must be guided by these. He hoped that the meeting on Saturday would clarify our vision as we continue to work on our Mission Action Plan so did not wish to make

decisions about designating money before that. One of our priorities will be to raise our profile including the use of social media, the website and plans for the North entrance. RC agreed to take responsibility for reporting on Brightwell Road during future PCC meetings. We now pay a letting agent to look after this property who will contact RC when maintenance work is required. RC thanked PD for bringing to our attention the ruling about designated funds being counted in our reserves which is now very clear. The other issue is a separate one which is about the advice we have from the IA about sweeping back designated funds that appear to have no purpose into the general fund. It doesn't follow that necessarily we have to sweep everything back. RC was concerned that HB's revised accounts for December anticipated that this is what we would do, in advance of a PCC decision. RC also reminded us that there had been no PCC discussion on how the excess expenditure over the allocated sum for work on the church centre roof would be funded. We had estimated it would be £110,000, but the actual cost was £116,000. Roger has been expecting that there would be a resolution about how that extra money would be funded. PD responded by saying that if there is no resolution it has to be transferred as excess money but it is still possible to designate some money. He agrees that we do need to designate some money for upgrading the AV system and to finish the work on the bell tower. PD reminded us of the resolution that was in his report. If this is not accepted the church accounting regulations force HB to put the money back into the General Fund. RC pointed out that we are in the opposite position of having overspent the money set aside for the church roof by £6,000 and so far there has not been a PCC resolution saying where that money will come from. We moved £50,000 from the Development Fund to help pay for the Church Centre roof. PD replied that we can have a separate resolution for this. There is money sitting in the Development Fund for which there is no immediate purpose. RC is concerned that money transferred back into the General Fund will seep away because we are facing a deficit. PD reminded us that DS stressed during the appeal in 2021 the need to raise the level of regular income, but PD felt that appeals for specific projects had detracted from this. He went on to say that we need to work on ways of increasing our regular income rather than our next development project. TE felt that we are already taking seriously the need to raise our regular income and that groups were looking at ways of achieving this. RC felt that designated money which largely had come from legacies should go to specific significant projects rather than being swept away in the General Fund. TR asked what we need to do immediately given that we have an awayday on Saturday to look at the MAP. PD said that HB has had to move money from the development fund to present accounts that are acceptable to the IA. Following a discussion about electrical inspections it was agreed that RC would proceed to arrange for one for the Church Centre and to leave the church inspection until a later date. The following resolution was proposed by PD, Seconded by MG and agreed with 2 abstentions (RC,

TE): *“The PCC resolves to keep £22k in a designated development fund to cover outstanding works on the AV system, church IT network and bell tower transferring remaining surplus development and church centre refurbishment designated funds back to its general fund”.*

**ACTION:** RC to arrange for an electrical inspection in the Church Centre.

- RC reported on the results of the income projections meeting he had with TE and CH on 28 January. Full notes were circulated with the PCC agenda. He repeated that we need to construct an attractive appeal and make sure we make best use of our assets (see point 6 in the report). CH and TE said they found it helpful to relate church giving to the cost of everyday items such as a cup of coffee. TR was interested in the idea of creating a ‘Friends of St. Mary’s Scheme’. Although he had some reservations and it would need someone to administer, he felt it might appeal to some former members of St. Mary’s who have moved on. He also felt people did give generously and PD added that some former members continue to give after they have moved until they get more involved in a new fellowship. PD commented that we do have the ability for giving by card, but it requires twinning a device with a mobile phone. This would require someone being in church every Sunday to deal with this task. MG had observed this system in a church she had visited recently. There are obvious security issues in our situation during the week and PD said that to have a secure system to leave in the church during the week would increase the cost. The question also came up about when we should resume taking a collection during services. TR thanked the group for setting down some constructive ways for increasing our giving. He felt that giving by card is something we should return to as we want to make giving as easy as possible now that fewer people carry cash.
- Budget. RC pointed out that we have a forecast of a substantial deficit which raises questions. We do not have proposals from the Finance Committee about what we do about it. He suggested that the paper from the income projections meeting should be submitted to the Finance Committee and that we should expect from them a comparable paper on the expenditure side. We shouldn’t accept the situation without having some proposals of how we address it. PD responded by saying that the purpose of a forecast budget is to allow us to monitor whether we are on track. We do need an appeal this year and ways to capture people’s imagination. From managing the finances point of view we need a working document to manage how we are doing. RC felt that our expectations should not be what was in the forecast. Looking at the income and expenditure might lead to revised expectations. Accepting it as a probable outcome for the year is not a responsible view of the future. PD agreed that the Finance Committee will take on board the paper from the income projections meeting and meet to gather a strategy by which an appeal is presented to the congregation. MG recalled a conversation about publicising the

buildings for lettings purposes. TR responded by commenting on the pandemic effect and challenges we will face as CdaC and JB move on later in the year and how we will fill the gaps they leave. He urged us not to lose sight of what God wants us to do with our resources. PD reminded us that other committees have to share in the responsibilities for staffing and buildings along with the Finance Committee and TR urged us to encourage some of the people who are not currently committee members to come on board to share their expertise and wisdom. TR feels that we are not yet in a position to approve the budget and hopes that the Finance Committee will be able to submit some ideas for us to consider about how we might move forward, during the week before the next meeting in March. PD reminded us he has given us the best forecast and that as trustees we are required to approve a budget. RC identified a difference between the Finance Committee saying we must do something and pointing out the options available to us. TE believed that we are trying to set our goals and define our priorities but that it is a work in progress. TR saw a difference between receiving the forecast and approving a budget. RC sees the Finance Committee as the chief tool in managing the finances. TR suggested that we defer any decision until March, starting with the awayday on Saturday and then sitting down to work through these things. PD said that as trustees we need to agree the forecast to enable the Finance Committee to measure income and expenditure against the forecast. Cd-J asked for clarification and PD confirmed that he is asking the PCC to receive the forecast. TR sees a difference between accepting a forecast and approving a budget so following further comments from AS, MG and AI it was agreed by all present that we should receive the forecast but at the same time look for ways to improve our income and continue to explore ways to cut expenditure.

**ACTION: Finance Committee to review the paper submitted by the income projections group and with other committees to consider ways of reducing expenditure.**

**Brightwell Road.** Nothing to report.

- b. **Buildings.** RC's report had been circulated. He has now received a second quote for work in the Bell Chamber. He will submit both to our architect and bring them back to the Standing Committee for a decision to accept one of them. Everything else in the report is current. TR asked about general maintenance as damp in the office area had been caused by a blocked downpipe. RC responded saying that the gutters are cleared every year and assured us that in future he would make sure that the downpipes are attended to at the same time. JB enquired when the faculty notice can be taken down from website and RC confirmed that it can be removed tomorrow, 22 Feb.  
**ACTION: JB to remove faculty notice from the website. RC to submit estimates for work in the Bell Chamber to our architect.**

- c. **Staffing Committee.** Nothing to report.

- d. **Pre-School.** The AGM was held via Zoom on 8 Feb. followed immediately by a committee meeting. We heard an encouraging report from the manager, Natalia. They now have 24 children, the maximum, and also have a waiting list. The children and staff represent diverse cultures and religions with 7 different languages spoken. There are two new members of staff. Annalise who has a Level 3 qualification started after Christmas and has settled in well. Daniella Dan-Jumbo is also working two days a week and is working towards her Level 3. Natalia will be placing an advertisement in March to appoint a deputy manager. This will hopefully coincide with Adriana the apprentice completing her Level 3 examination. Staff, children and parents all seem happy and there has been encouraging feedback from a parent questionnaire. Pre-School finances are in a healthy position thanks to a Covid Recovery Grant, although we anticipate considerable expenditure when the children's toilets are fitted. During the committee meeting we reviewed the 3-year business plan. We are now in year 2 and are pleased with the progress made so far. Currently they are working on the curriculum, opportunities to work in partnership with the Women's Centre and the website. There have been two offers of help to develop and maintain the website and a meeting is being arranged for them to meet with Natalia and CdaC to find the best way forward. There are some issues with the new cooker and we are waiting for an electrician to check the power supply which is the most likely cause of the problem. The committee is diminishing in number with the departure of Frances Collins in November and with CdaC moving on in June. Adriana, the apprentice, has agreed to join the committee as a representative from the staff, but ideally we would like a parent representative and another member from St. Mary's Church.
- e. **Missions.** Although the Missions Group has not met, AS reported that she had spoken to Frances Collins concerning David Leake's support. If we switch to supporting him through CMS Ireland all the money will go towards David's work in South America. Currently our support is via CMS England which means that some of the donations are contributing to the administration of CMS world-wide missions. Frances will forward further details to help us decide what we would like to do.
- f. **Deanery.** CH reported on the meeting held on 9 Feb. at St. Mary's. The new Diocesan Secretary, David White, spoke about his work and CH intends to speak to him on behalf of the deanery and St. Mary's now that she has met him. TE added that he spoke about the parish share, which got her thinking about what we are contributing to in the diocese. TR felt David had spoken with clarity and transparency about diocesan finances and would be very approachable when the time comes to have a constructive conversation about how much we currently contribute, which is clearly too much. TR said that it was good to have Vanessa Kerswill, as assistant Rural Dean, chairing the meeting in Peter Waddell's absence. TR had resumed his duties as RD briefly to be present at Vanessa's installation as vicar of St. Peter's. AS pointed out that according to the paper that had been circulated (Parish Share Factor Review), we need to respond by 31 May otherwise it will be assumed we are

happy with the current arrangements. JB suggested it would be helpful to get in touch with Dr. Richard Southern, the diocesan finance rep., to arrange a meeting. TR agreed that we should get together after a Monday staff meeting to put together a strong argument.

**ACTION: TR and JB to meet to discuss our response to the Parish Share Factor Review.**

8. **Map update.** TR urged everyone to attend the meeting this Saturday as we continue to seek our future direction. Everyone has now seen a programme. We need to have a clear vision for what we feel God wants us to do.

9. **Policy reviews:**

**Safe use of image policy.** Following on from last month's discussion TR acknowledged that we need to consider carefully what we put on our service sheet and how we implement this as we move to transition from Zoom to live-streaming so that we are compliant with this policy.

**Lone working policy.** The issue of personal alarms has not been forgotten and is being looked into. Both this and the safe use of image policy have not been forgotten.

PD expressed concern that as well as making sure we implement these policies Pam Rastall or Jacky Faria should ensure that the policies are updated as requested in previous meetings and that the review date is also included.

**Privacy Policy** AS pointed out that the form at the bottom of the policy needs to go out with all new electoral roll forms. She is not sure that this has been the case recently. PD suggested the following amendment: Under **Sharing your personal data** at the end of the first page he feels the last sentence should read, "**we will only share your data with third parties outside the parish as required by law or with your consent**". RC suggested that it should include the date when it is due to be reviewed. Most of the policies should be reviewed every two years. RC added that this should also have a review date added. Our standard review is every two years.

**Probationary Guidance.** Everyone was happy with this policy and it was noted that the review date of every two years should be added.

**ACTION: Jacy Faria / Pam Rastall to check that policies reviewed in this and previous PCC meetings are updated with the addition of the date for the next review.**

10. **Vicar's Report.**

- TR remarked on the '**Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**'. St. Mary's hosted the service to mark the end of this on Wed. 9 Feb. He also attended the Christians Across Watford retreat in Bushey Heath and thought the venue might be suitable for future St. Mary's events. It was good to meet with other Christian leaders in Watford and found it a positive time of networking.
- TR has been impressed with the quality of services at St. Mary's including the choir's contribution. He made special mention of the service remembering the



life of Desmond Tutu and had appreciated the contributions from several members of our congregation and the African style of worship.

- He had a Zoom meeting with Peter Taylor and one or two representatives from The British Legion to explore ideas for Remembrance Sunday which would help to show greater support for the British Legion in Watford and to promote its work.
- TR enjoyed an evening at West Herts College celebrating Burns Night with Rotarians. He was impressed by the facilities which he thought might be useful for a church social / fund-raising event.
- He had been present at the installation of Vanessa Kerswill as vicar of St. Peter's
- He also attended a Holocaust Remembrance Education Day at the Girls Grammar School, which was part of his annual review of the religious character of the school.
- Apart from ministry commitments he had appreciated a welcome holiday in Yorkshire last week in spite of the wild weather.

**11. Health and Safety Issues / Safeguarding.** No issues

**12. Any other business.**

- RC noticed from St. Mary's News that the opening times have been extended. He was pleased to see this and hoped the notices on the doors would be updated. He also asked if the next PCC meeting would be back in the Church Centre. TR hopes this will be possible.  
**ACTION: Notices on church doors to be updated with new opening times.**
- CH asked if there is a Holocaust Memorial in this country, having visited Yad Vashem during a pilgrimage in Israel. TR confirmed that there is a centre in Nottingham and he will send CH the Link.
- TE expressed concern about the noise in church on Sunday 13 Feb. while there were a lot of small children in the service. She wondered if quieter toys could be provided. PD confirmed that Liz is working on it and TR said he hoped she would consult CdaC on this. As it was half-term there were no children's classes that day, but it is not likely to happen again.
- TR reminded everyone that during the next meeting we will be looking at the Annual Report. It is important that those Pam Rastall has requested articles from keep to the tight deadline for submission, which is 11 March.  
**ACTION: All annual reports to be submitted to Pam Rastall by 11 March.**

**13. Closing Prayer.** The meeting ended with the Living God's Love prayer at 10.25.

**Date of next meeting: Monday 21 March 7.30 in the Church Centre (venue to be confirmed)**