



Parochial Church Council

Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 May 2023 at 12.10pm

Present:

Rev. Tony Rindl (TR) - Chair
Peter Dean (PD) – Churchwarden, Vice Chair
Tilly Elliott (TE)
Lesley Gray (LG)
Margaret Greenstreet (MG)
Cathy Honeyman (CH)
Dave King (DK)
Eileen Roby (ER)
Gill Watson (GW)
Marcus Jones (MJ) - PCC Secretary
Dean Russell, MP for Watford (Observer)

1. Opening Prayer

1.1 TR explained that Dean Russell MP was attending as an observer because he was shadowing TR for the day.

1.2 MJ opened the meeting with prayer.

2. Apologies for absence

2.1 Apologies were received from Abie Idris (AI) and Roger Courtney.

3. Approval of the Minutes of 24 April 2023

3.1 A change was agreed to section 9.1.1, second bullet, regarding legacies. MJ commented that there was a need for further work on this issue.

3.2 MG proposed that the minutes be accepted. This was seconded by TE and approved unanimously by the Council.

4. Planning for APCM 2023

i. Postponement of presentation of 2022 accounts: Response from Bishop

4.1 TR reported that the Bishop had agreed to the postponement of the presentation of the 2022 accounts to the congregation until later in the year.

ii. Churchwarden vacancy

4.2 TR reported that an article about the duties of a churchwarden had been included in the May edition of St Mary's News.

4.3 It was apparent that nobody had yet come forward to fill the vacancy. There was a discussion about the possibility of recruiting deputies or 'helpers' to assist in the role.

iii. PCC Vacancies

4.4 TR reported that Anniefrida Kadzura was stepping down as Treasurer¹ and expressed the Council's thanks for all she had done in that role. Several members highlighted the need for this post to be filled as soon as possible. According to the Church Representation Rules, if no-one else could undertake these duties, a churchwarden had to do so in addition to their other obligations. It was too much to expect PD, as sole churchwarden, to do this as well.

4.5 TR suggested that a member of Finance Committee (FinCom) might consider taking on the role. GW explained that while FinCom worked with several people who acted in a consultative or similar capacity, there was limited technical accounting ability among its regular members. MJ reminded members that following the summer 2022 Standing Committees, TR had undertaken to speak to certain people about the possibility of becoming Treasurer. TR said that these discussions had not been fruitful.

4.6 It was observed that there had been no publicity about the need for a Treasurer. It was agreed that the vacancy would be highlighted at the APCM.

Action: TR and PD to advertise the Treasurer vacancy at the APCM.

4.7 TR thanked AI and DK for their contributions to the Council.

4.8 It was anticipated that there could be up to four vacancies on the Council. Three nominations had been received so far.

iv. Draft Annual Report

4.9 PD requested a minor change to the draft report and undertook to write the Deanery Synod section.

¹ *Secretary's note:* While sections 4.4 – 4.6 accurately record the Council's discussion, references to the Treasurer in these sections reflect St Mary's practice at the time of the meeting of using that title for the person who keeps the accounts i.e. 'the Book-keeper'. The Council subsequently adopted the title for the person overseeing finance, previously termed 'the Chair of Finance'. This change brought St Mary's into line with *An ABC for the PCC – A Handbook for Church Council Members* which states: "The Treasurer's job is to look after the money, to report to the PCC on the financial situation, and to advise the PCC on the financial implications of any decision it is about to make. When the Treasurer gives advice, not only the liabilities and resources must be taken into account but also the order of priority which the PCC attaches to the expenditure of its money."

Action

- PD to write Deanery Synod section
- MJ to make minor change requested by PD

v. Safeguarding

4.10 LG referred to those section of her May Safeguarding Report which pertained to the APCM. She said we were working towards the standards set out in Bishop's Guidance and a had some way to go.

5. Any other business

i. Finance

5.1 TR said that the Council had received the minutes of FinCom's May meeting and a revised draft Budget. These should be discussed in more detail at the next meeting but he asked whether members wished to make any observations in the meantime.

5.2 A concern was raised that, due to the book-keeper's reduced hours, figures were not yet available for January. This could indicate that the day-to-day records might not be brought fully up to date any time soon and might even fall further behind. TR and PD undertook to look into this.

Action: TR and PD to speak with book-keeper.

5.3 It was pointed out that even though there would be no presentation of the accounts at the APCM, questions about finance were very likely to be raised. There was a discussion about how best to ensure accurate answers.

6.Date of next meeting

6.1 The next Council meeting will take place at 7.30pm on 19 June 2023.

The meeting closed at 12.55pm with the *Living God's Love* prayer.

Marcus Jones
PCC Secretary