



Parochial Church Council

Minutes of the Meeting held on 20th June 2022

The evening started with Holy Communion in Church at 7.30pm then moved into the Church Centre for the Meeting to begin.

Present:

Revd Tony Rindl (TR) (Chair)
Revd Joshua Brocklesby (JB)
Peter Dean (PD)
Tilly Elliot (TE)
Lesley Gray (LG) (via Zoom due to Covid)
Margaret Greenstreet (MG)
Cathy Honeyman (CH)
Marcus Jones (MJ)
Dave King (DK)
Gill Watson (GW)

In Attendance: Pam Rastall (PR) (Minute taker)

- 1 **Holy Communion** in church: JB presided and TR preached, continuing on his theme from the APCM about growing a vineyard.
- 2 **Welcome to new members** – LG (via Zoom), DK, JW and MJ.
- 3 **Apologies for Absence** (or not present) – Annafrida Kadzura (AK), Joanna Cooper (JC), Clinton Dan-Jumbo (CD-J), Abie Idris (AI)

Post APCM business items

- 4 **Trustee Responsibilities – Declaration of Conflict of Interest** – details previously circulated by email
GW reported from (her husband) Richard Watson who arranges payment of staff salaries, his concern over the current employment of David Scourfield (DS) and Daniella Clinton (DC); he says permission should have been sought from the Charity Commission. There is a MOU between St Mary's and Watford Town Centre Chaplaincy (WTCC) with St Mary's paying 25% of DS's salary costs and WTCC 75%. There is legal uncertainty and therefore legal advice should be sort. PD thought WTCC were going to seek a separate payroll operator for DS

following the signing of the MOU in February. DC is the daughter of a member of the PCC so should have been listed under Declaration of Conflict of Interest before her employment by the Pre-School. TR agreed this should be looked into and the Charity Commission contacted to say it was an honest mistake.

ACTION: MJ to contact the Charity Commission

5 Confidentiality

TR asked members not to share discussions outside of PCC meetings although accepted there was a fine line between secrecy and transparency/openness. The Minutes, once signed, are on public display.

6 Elections

a) Vice-Chair – PD's name was put forward. MJ asked if another burden needed putting on PD? PD replied to say TR is not often absent and when he had been recently, the chair had been handed over to JB for training purposes. It was therefore agreed that PD would be Vice-Chair.

b) Treasurer – in her absence AK was appointed as Treasurer.

c) Secretary and d) Minute Secretary – MJ volunteered to take on these roles.

He will also write a short summary of PCC meetings for St Mary's News.

Tony proposed that these names be elected *en bloc*, seconded by CH and agreed by all present.

TR had approached Roger Courtney (RC) about being co-opted onto PCC, as Chair of Buildings – RC had agreed. The Council agreed to this co-option.

7 Election of Standing Committee

Proposal: Vicar (TR), Warden(s) (PD), Treasurer (AK), Secretary (MJ) and Chair of Property (RC) + one other (TE) – to decide on matters between PCC meetings as necessary – membership agreed by all present.

8 Periods of Service of New Members

All new members to stand for three years ie to APCM 2025 (LG, MJ, DK, GW)

MG, AK, JC to stand to APCM 2024

CDJ, TE, AI to stand to APCM 2023

9 Committee Structure and Membership

Buildings, Finance and Pre-School – all of which include co-opted members who are not on PCC. The Staffing Committee has recently been the Standing Committee but could be re-started; the fluidity of employment is via the Pre-School. The Pre-School Committee needs new members. The Pastoral Team needs looking at.

Finance: PD and AK from PCC, plus Charlie Luckhurst and Helen Baldwin so could do with one or two more, preferably good communicators (including presentation skills). GW offered to join but admitted she had no financial skills and was not a good communicator, but TR said she could be someone who said, 'I don't understand, please explain'. She agreed to join.

Buildings: currently only RC. TE, who had worked on the soft furnishings for the Church Centre, offered to join as did CH who said she could ask questions.

Others will need to be co-opted. TR suggested Liz Allan (LA), as Facilities Manager, should be asked to join.

ACTION: LA to be asked to join Buildings Committee

Pre-School: Currently MG, Alison Saunders. TR attends some. TR will take back the line-management of the new manager. Others will need to be co-opted.

10 **Dates of PCC Meetings 2022-2023**

TR said for various reasons the dates have moved to the second Monday of each month. How does this work for Finance, getting figures out one week prior to PCC meetings? Does it have to be working to calendar months, could it be figures between PCC meetings? Finance does the number crunching, but PCC needs to monitor the budget and forecast so needs a summary of the financial activities – consolidated figures - to present to PCC. Finance Committee to work on this.

Suggested dates: 11th July 2022, 12th September, 10th October, 14th November, (12th December,) 9th January 2023, 13th February, 13th March.

11 **APCM**

a) Minutes to be received only (copy available) – please make any comments if mistakes are noticed.

b) Matters Arising

- (i) *Resolution passed at APCM for a PCC Climate Change Committee* – MJ read out the resolution ('This meeting welcomes the Eco Church initiatives taken by the informal climate change group and invites the PCC to build on these by establishing a committee to develop St Mary's response to the climate emergency'). He said it was an initiative begun by JB last July and followed up with an article in St Mary's News. At the Vicar's request, Andy Roby preached in October after which an informal group was begun. This now needs to be formalised as a PCC Committee – Climate Emergency Committee. ECO church forms part of a wider Anglican initiative. *The Zero Carbon* report would be put to Synod in July and was expected to be adopted. The Report sets ambitious and tough targets for diocese and churches to do a wide range of changes and reporting including ECO church targets for bronze by 2023. MJ proposed Roger Courtney as Chair. TR is supporting the resolution but doesn't want it to be at the expense of other areas of important need in the church. Members spoke about if people are called to do something they are not to be put off; those offering are not those who would offer to help with e.g. children's work. MJ said we are likely to be required by the Diocese to do something as EcoChurch is on their agenda.

TE suggested members spoke to members of the congregation about what areas of need are required to be filled. TR suggested people attend activities in church to find out what happens at each one i.e. Pre-School, Wednesday Fellowship, Foodbank, etc.

Acceptance of the Resolution was proposed by MJ, seconded by TE and agreed by all present.

- (ii) *Presentation of Accounts to APCM* – MJ said an explanatory presentation is needed in plain English. Action point for Finance to consider before the next APCM, using the new membership.
- (iii) *The need to answer questions raised about reserves* – MJ spoke about the need to explain where the accounts stand and to address the question asked about how long the reserves would last before we breached our reserves policy threshold? One way might be to write an article in St Mary's News and he asked Finance Committee to consider this. Some members felt the answer given to this at the APCM was unclear. PD stated that the threshold might well be breached around the end of 2022.
- (iv) *Encouraging a more diverse attendance at next year's APCM* – MJ asked that in the month before next year's APCM there is an explanation of what this is and also what the Electoral Roll is as many in the congregation are from a non-Anglican background – this might encourage them to join in more.

Regular business items

- 12 **Approval of the Minutes of 25th April 2022** – copy available
Proposed by TE and seconded by PD; and agreed by all present.

13 **Safeguarding**

DBS checks - not all members have done their on-line training or had their DBS checks. These are a legal responsibility protecting both PCC members and others they are dealing with. There is no distinction between employees and volunteers. New members to PCC need two character references (this was new to them). TR had learnt this on a recent Safer Recruitment training. The on-line training can either be done individually in which case a certificate is given, or as a group in which case names of those in the group would be sent to Jez Hurst at the Diocese.

Recruitment of Safeguarding Officer – TR said LG had agreed to act as Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO); she comes with a wealth of experience. LG has had her DBS check and given her two references; she had done some training but needs to do more before she can be formally appointed as PSO. There is to be a Safeguarding Policy folder, compiled by Cath Da Costa (CDC), which will include everything, and which members will need to read and sign to say they have read its contents. Statements are pinned on the board in the Church Centre and in

the church porch as requested. MJ said he and Roger Courtney had assisted Cath da Costa in updating the Church Safeguarding Policy and asked if a final draft was available for approval by the PCC. TR suggested this be left until the PCC meeting in September to give LG time to look at it and to speak to Jacky Faria (JF) who currently does the admin for safeguarding.

14 GDPR

JB is working on a password protected area of the website for PCC members so papers will no longer be sent as attachments via email. All papers and policies in the PCC drive will be the up-to-date copies.

15 Matters Arising

(i) Monitor and IT issues – a meeting has been arranged with ‘Creative’ and TR, PD, JB and RC

(ii) Concerns over Children and Families Work – a letter had been received from Jenny Luckhurst showing her concerns – this had been copied to members. This will be discussed at the next PCC meeting. TR said St Mary’s was in a very different position than it had been when CDC was appointed and there was a need to look at the current situation.
ACTION: To discuss at next meeting.

(iii) Deanery Share – PD had compiled evidence to offer the Deanery an argument to lower the share factor for St Mary’s. It has been agreed to lower it to 1.6 (would have preferred 1.2 or 1.3); this is a reduction of £3,000 which helps. If St Mary’s is reduced, other churches have to be increased.

(iv) Statement on Domestic Abuse – this is covered under Safeguarding and will be a separate document within the Safeguarding folder.

16 Correspondence

See 15(ii) above. This was postponed until the next meeting to allow for a full discussion.

17 Committee Reports

a) Finance – paper available; also copies of Accounts to March 2022 and to April 2022

PD said income was down for the first third of the year – 24% of expected annual income although the gift aid claim would take it up to 27%. Expenditure was closer to forecast. An appeal was needed for day-to-day expenditure rather than for specifics. PD is chasing Myers Clark for a final version of the 2021 Accounts. Regarding income, planned giving is the main concern as lettings income is about where it should be. There was a discussion about passing the plate around during services and also about

taking the offering up during a service. TR said many people don't carry money so there is a need to encourage a new culture of giving; he also asked that Finance look into a card reader again. There was also a discussion on the Register of Related Parties and who should be included – anyone who might have any financial connection to St Mary's in the future.

MJ then asked if St Mary's can still afford to give away 10% of the lettings' income. TR asked what sort of church members wanted St Mary's to be. There then followed discussion culminating in the suggestion that we should defer it, pray about it and come back to it at a future meeting.

Publication of the Scourfield Financial Review: MJ asked if it could be published; there is nothing confidential in it; it needs updating as it was written early in 2021. Agreed it could be published noting it is out of date.

b) Buildings – paper available from RC.

Bell chamber work to be done but no firm date yet. Floodlighting – there was a discussion on whether to continue with floodlighting based on earlier discussions re the climate emergency. Agreed to keep the cross illuminated but to disconnect the uplighters.

Back to the floodlights – more input is requested from RC as members did not feel confident to spend that amount of money in the current financial situation.

c) Pre-School – TR read out a paper he had received from CDC that afternoon – see copy at the end of these Minutes.

18 Refurbishment Update

Left on from an old Agenda but reminds members that there are further aspirations to develop the north side of St Mary's and not to lose sight for the building to be made more accessible.

19 Vicar's Report

- TR reported it was good to be back, although he was not sure he was yet 100%.
- He had attended the Old Fullerians dinner and had some good conversations about the heightened level of anxiety amongst pupils – systematic of where we are at.
- It was good to go to Kate Carter's Induction into the Grays Thurrock Team Ministry in the Diocese of Chelmsford; seeing one of our own making that journey to be a Vicar in her own right. Not forgetting Cath, Ash and Phil at their ordinations early in July.
- It had been a good Ascension Day Service in St Luke's.

- He had attended a volunteers' evening for Watford & Three Rivers Refugee Partnership (WTRRP) on fuel poverty led by the CAB; he had also attended WTRRP AGM.
- He had been into Sunday School and been impressed by DC; it was excellent she was going to a local university.
- He had attended the Foundation Trust at the Grammar School regarding religious inspection.
- He had been to a meeting, in Hatfield, of the Steering Group looking at a Faith Covenant strengthening a working relationship with HCC.
- It had been his delight to be with PD when he had been installed as Churchwarden for a further year; photos available to be included in SMN.
- He had, along with the IME Officer, signed off three lovely curates, as an independent assessor – they give him hope for the future of the CofE.

20 **Health and Safety** – nothing to report

21 **Any Other Business**

- a) TE said she had noticed there was a *damaged blind* in the Church Centre, pre-school area; not sure of the cause. MG said she would speak to the Pre-school.

ACTION: MG to speak to Pre-School

- b) CH mentioned that at her Connect Group they had talked about a *Call to Prayer* for the church as had happened in the 1970s – a group praying for all aspects of church life. TR said 'watch this space' in relation to Connect Together meetings on the 1st Wednesday of each month.

- c) *Bishop Michael's final service* will be in the Cathedral on Saturday 16th July.

- d) TR mentioned that Sunday 26th June would be *CDC's last Sunday in St Mary's*. How would the parish be showing its appreciation for her outstanding contribution over the four or five years she had been working as Children and Family Worker? He was surprised nothing had been arranged. It was agreed that a garden token to the value of £500 from church funds would be presented to her at the end of the service; MG would organise.

ACTION: MG to arrange a token

22 The meeting closed with TR leading the **Living God's Love Prayer** at 10.40pm.