

THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, MALDEN
Registered Charity No. 1145155

Minutes of the 725th Meeting of the Parochial Church Council
held on Tuesday, 5th November 2019 in the Church Extension

Present: Lynn Sanger in the chair, Margaret Barrington, Jane Bransgrove, Mike Broome, Milly Broome, Brian Bowers, Marilyn Burkett, Richard Burkett, Steve Clark, Lisa Down, Louise Hall, Deborah Harris, Martina Herpak, Sally Josolyne, Anthony Pullen and Liz Pullen.

In attendance: Alastair Harris (church treasurer) and Faith Bowers (clerk).

Milly opened with prayer.

- 7230 1 - Apologies for absence were received from the Vicar, Pauline Armour, Franklin Barrington, Marie Maguire, .
- 7231 **2 - Notice of Essential AOB** Milly had one item.
- 7232 3 - **Minutes of the October PCC Meeting** were approved and signed. They would be published on the church noticeboard and website. **CWs/Amy**
- 7233 **4 - Finance** (This was taken first while Alastair was present)

Treasurer's Report

Alastair presented figures for the nine months to 30 September. He would be available to answer questions the next Sunday but then away for some weeks.

The accounts showed a deficit of £6,674, although various factors should reduce that a little. The deficit on the whole year was likely to be rather higher than originally anticipated. Donations and plate collections were down a little on 2018.

Prediction is not easy because activity is not consistent around the year. Routine organ maintenance had not previously been included but it had been agreed that it should now be: this involved tuning twice a year and blower maintenance, as well as dealing with any problems that might arise. The October expenditure would include £1,200 on the vicarage garden and clearing the track from the vicarage to Church Road. Churchyard expenses were interpreted liberally to include the Vicarage curtilage and the church noticeboards at Plough Green and the Church Hall. Chairs for the Lounge had been an extra expense this year but were covered by a donation. Magazine subscriptions had fallen and there were less OMN advertisements: more is now done online. The Church Hall noticeboard had cost £1,200 which had not been in the budget.

A deficit of £3,051 was agreed for the 2019 budget, but the actual figure would be higher at about £4,500. The present figures were on a cash basis but those at the end of the year would be on accrual basis. Only two quarters of 2019 had so far had the Gift Aid refunds, and there would be a fifth to come on the permitted small donations.

Marilyn asked about Gift Aid on giving in kind. Alastair explained that Gift Aid could legitimately be claimed on these, e.g. the three chairs that came as a gift to the church, though not those bought by the churchwardens, although they used money that had been donated. To claim, the donor must be a taxpayer who fills in the required form. Alastair urged people to do this: first, because it increased the benefit of their gift, and secondly, because the generosity of those who could afford it could hide the true costs of running the church and make it harder for others to take on responsibilities. Lynn said that this would apply to the flowers, which were often bought by members of the flower team who did not reclaim the cost. Alastair said that was a good example of a hidden cost and it would be good to keep a record and receipts over the year, noting these by the named persons. **LS**

Richard offered to write a piece for OMN, explaining about Gift Aid on gifts in kind. **RB**

Alastair said the budget was approached in the same way as previous years. The overall figures were correct but he was still working at alignment of cost and income figures as Tatiana's records

had been categorised differently.

Mike noted that expenditure on the utilities was down a little, although they fluctuate with weather. Using Parish Buying was helpful.

Alastair really needed someone to look into the office costs on Phone and Broadband which seemed unduly high. Steve said Plusnet was cheaper than BT. Mike offered to look into this.

Mike

Budget Richard presented the Budget for 2020 and the Finance Committee's Recommendations (fuller details on the attached paper).

There had been a further 11 responses to the appeal on Free Will Offerings. The increase should be about £1,600, but was not included in the budget as it had not yet been received. There would be a further appeal in Lent. Richard asked the Congregation Committee to consider how best to consult or communicate with the Congregation. Richard had talked to Andy, who had been successful in appeals for the parochial school, largely by direct contact with parents. Richard needed someone willing to be regularly accessible at the services to represent this need to people. A diocesan officer had offered to advise on this in the New Year. Father Michael should be asked to write to thank those who were increasing their giving.

RB/MR

Recommendation to PCC that the salary and honoraria for the parish administrator, organist and director of music be raised by 2%. Jane seconded this and it was carried unanimously.

Recommendation to PCC that the fees for weddings and funerals (set out on attached paper) be adopted for 2020. (These fees are separate from the Church of England statutory rates which go partly to the PCC and partly to the Diocese but are not decided by the PCC). The fees would remain the same, except for a small increase in charge for heating and lighting. Jane seconded this recommendation and it was carried with one abstention.

Richard proposed that the Budget be adopted. Sally seconded this and it was carried with one abstention.

Thanks were expressed to Alastair, Richard and their team for all the work involved.

Good News Richard told the PCC there had been an anonymous donation of £10,000. Alastair had talked with the donor and established that this could not be gift-aided but the PCC could decide how best to use it. He judged it would be better segregated for work on the building, not drawn on to defray the current deficit, which could be covered from reserves.

Richard recommended beginning a new designated **Building Major Works Fund**. Marilyn seconded this and it was carried unanimously.

It would be good to tell the donor how the money would be used, e.g to kick start the fund for work on the tower which could not long be delayed and would most likely require an appeal to the wider community..

Mike said the Maintenance team had dealt with a number of the items raised in the 2017 Quinquennial inspection, so this was now down to a hard core of items. An architect, experienced in church buildings, had visited two weeks earlier and he could produce a report (for one-off payment of £930, inclusive of VAT) to advise the PCC on priorities and how to proceed. Stage 2 would include estimated costings.

Lynn proposed from the chair that £930 from the £10,000 should be spent on this initial report. This was carried with two abstentions.

Alastair could inform the donor of these decisions.

AH

Marilyn observed that the Congregation Committee was planning Thank You tea for all who work for the church in one way or another, but the committee has no budget of its own.

Marilyn said she had asked those chairing all committees to give her lists of their members but so far only two had done so. She needed them for the Thank You Tea. **All**

7235 **6 - Vicar's Report** The vicar was away but had nothing to report yet.

7236 **7 - Safeguarding**

The vicar, churchwardens and safeguarding officers had met twice and would continue to meet monthly. It was clear that the leaders of all the church's various activities needed to have DBS checks. Amy should create a spreadsheet on which to record these. All these people needed to be identified and receive training. The signed policy was now displayed on the noticeboard. The Church Hall has its own policy and this is covered in the rental agreements. The diocesan guidelines would be followed in updating the documentation.

Lists of all those involved in running activities are needed for this (as well as for Marilyn). Not only all those leading work with children, but those who run Tea and Chat, those providing food and transport on Christmas Day, etc. There was some concern that this could kill spontaneous volunteering, but the church needed to follow diocesan guidance.

Margaret said the important aspect was Contextual Risk Assessment - asking where the risk lies in each particular context. Thus having two people in each car to collect vulnerable older people would reduce the risk. She added that the main concern related to regular volunteers. She could, for example, let someone unchecked help once with the children to see if it was something they would like to do, but to go on a regular rota the DBS check was required. Risk assessment (where are the vulnerabilities?) was really a more important driver than DBS itself.

The church needed to think about policy if there was a disclosure.

The churchwardens still awaited further guidance from the diocese, but they needed to list the various responsible people. **CWs/SOs**

7237 **8 - Contactless Giving**

Sally reported that the group had met again and was continuing to test the device. It had been used at one baptism and worked well. Unfortunately it had not been available for the next, very well attended baptism: they now knew it should be kept charged and in the office. Milly said there would be another baptism on 17 November.

Alastair was concerned to know how and when it was used in order to relate takings to the relevant accounts. Sally felt that the dates would help identify such donations, but a more sophisticated device would help in due course.

The device should be available at the Christmas Fair, but also some means of recording from which stalls sales had been made, because stallholders like to know their totals. **LS/SJ**

7238 **9 - Reports and Recommendations from Committees**

a) Children and Young People - This committee hoped to meet in November. There was a great need for more people willing to lead the activities - there were several helpers but leaders were needed. They would talk to the Vicar about this.

Margaret was pleased that 11 Up were keen on a trip to an art gallery in January and a sleepover in February.

b) Church Hall - Brian said there was nothing to report this month.

c) Congregation Committee - Marilyn hoped the committee would meet in November and that more committees would supply their lists of workers. Carol singing at Worcester Park Station would be on the same day as the General Election, but at least that protected it from rail strikes. The contactless device should be available then too. **SJ/Marilyn**

Marilyn had collected a large quantity of warm knitwear and blankets for Romania. Contributions came widely from people in the parish, not only those in the Crochet and Knitting Group. St John's had been supporting the Romanian Aid Foundation since 1992. They waited to see how Brexit would affect this work.

d) *Finance* had been covered earlier.

e) *Fundraising* - Lynn said the Fair was foremost in their minds, but they were also planning a sociable evening in February.

f) *Maintenance* - Mike said the Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) had been delayed by illness. He would be glad to hear of anyone else approved for doing this. Brian was asked to check the requirements. Steve asked who did it for the Church Hall. **BB**

Mike said that fixing a mirror for the vicar's safety in crossing the road between vicarage and church was proving more complicated than at first thought but they were pursuing the matter.

g) *Outreach Committee* met on 17 October and had circulated minutes. There was now a cook for Christmas Day.

The sums for Mission Giving were the same as last year, with £2000 divided between the three charities chosen for the current three years (Young Minds Trust, the Lily Foundation and Humanity First) and £220 each to KCAH, the Fircroft Trust, Malden Manor Community Hub, the Daniel Spaargo-Mabbs Foundation, and Southwark Mothers' Union Away From It All scheme.. Suggestions for next year's charities would be welcome.

Milly proposed acceptance of Outreach's recommendations and these were carried unanimously.

h) *Sustainability* - this committee is currently not in action.

7238 **10 - Deanery Synod Report** - Anthony presented this, copy attached. The speaker had been the local Methodist Superintendent on the question of interchangeability of ministers and the complications thereof. The better focus was on what churches can do together, and sometimes also with those of other faiths. The Deanery would produce an action plan, with homelessness high on the agenda.

7239 **11 - PCC Foundation Governor for Malden Parochial Primary School**
Alastair Daniel and Andy Down are both governors, but another was needed. Hayley Speller, who attends the 8 a.m. service, had volunteered.
Mike proposed that Hayley be appointed a Foundation Governor. Liz seconded this and it was agreed, with some abstentions because she was not known to everyone.
Liz enquired whether there was any news of the school garden. Mike is less involved with the school now, with the Vicar as the main contact person, so he could be asked about this.

7240 **12 - AOB** Milly reported that Janet Jeal was very short of volunteers to clean the exxtension, in spite of recent appeals. It looked as if one week in the month there would be no cleaning. Perhaps it was time for a fresh look at time and talents in an age when people are reluctant to make regular commitments.
Lynn observed that there had been several responses for the Flower Team, and Sally said they also had new volunteers for the Food Bank. The more people volunteer to take a turn, the less often each one has to do it.

Lynn asked whether there might again be a collection plate for Christmas (previously done for the Christmas Day Event/Festival Flowers, but not in the past two years as Kevin felt there were too many appeals). The PCC was happy to invite contributions. Marilyn would put this on the appropriate pew sheets and the contactless device should be available. The Vicar could be asked to mention it in the notices.

There being no further business Milly closed the meeting with prayer at 10.05 p.m.

The next PCC meeting will be on Tuesday, 3 December 2019 at 8 p.m.

Papers to attach to these minutes

Analysis of income and expenditure 01 January 2019 to 30 September 2019.

Budget for 2020 and Recommendations

Mission Giving

Deanery Synod Report