

## Minutes of PCC Meeting - Monday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2020

**Present:** Beverly Watson (Chair), Marguerite Barclay, Rebecca Brown, Rob Burch, Rob Crossingham, Eve Gunn, Henrietta Harding, Robin Holdsworth, Chris Lambert, Julie Lodge, Simon Moulden, Carolyn Nicholls, Paddy Payne, Jo Smalley, Trish Tye (Secretary), Martyn Whiteman.

**Apologies:** Simon Doran

### 1. Approval of minutes

- 1.1. The minutes of the meetings held on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2020 were approved.
- 1.2. There was a discussion regarding how soon the minutes of a PCC meeting should be available. It was agreed that the draft minutes would be circulated to members of the PCC within 10 days of the meeting.

### 2. Standing committee decisions

- 2.1. The decisions from the Standing Committee meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2020 were noted.

### 3. Vision Groups

#### 3.1. Finance Vision Group

##### 3.1.1 Nine-month accounts and forecast for the year

Chris reported that we have done better than anticipated with the deficit standing at £6685 which is close to budget. Our reduced income is partly down to losses in the church hall rental, but also due to a fall in giving. In addition to this, we have missed out on income from the Summer Fete and there will be a further loss through not holding the Bonfire & Fireworks event. We have, however, benefited from a legacy of £2,150 and the £5,000 received from the Local Authority's Discretionary fund.

Our expenses have reduced considerably due to the closure of the buildings. We have also benefitted from the reduction in Parish Share granted by the Diocese. We will have a further reduction in Parish Share in next three months.

Chris' current forecast is that our end of year deficit is likely to be around £12-13k.

Eve reported that we have had no income from Reading Room rental, but church rentals are now on the rise since we have a more flexible space. A youth drama group is renting the church for three afternoons a week.

Martyn questioned whether the drop in giving is solely down to the closure of church and loss of cash donations. Chris reminded us that we rely on a few individuals for a large proportion of the giving and consequently, when we lose one of those, it has a large effect.

Paddy asked whether the grant from the Local Authority required any action on our part. Trish believes that there is no action required but will check.

**Action Trish:** To check the conditions of the Local Authority Discretionary Grant.

Carolyn asked whether any of the money received from the Bishop of Guildford's Foundation for Matrix needs to be repaid as Matrix no longer works with us.

**Action Beverly:** to investigate.

Beverly thanked Chris for his hard work on the accounts.

### 3.1.2 Deficit mitigation discussion

Beverly outlined the points that the Finance Vision Group discussed at their last meeting with regard to our projected deficit.

1. We will hold our usual stewardship campaign in February, and at that, we need to be very clear of our financial situation. The campaign usually leads to new givers. Thought was given as to whether we should hold this earlier than February, but was decided against because of the generous giving that we witnessed for the chairs.
2. The investment in the chairs is already giving a return in the form of new church lettings, this is a new income stream which got off the ground almost on the day the chairs arrived. Beverly offered a big thank you to Eve for her work in this area.
3. We have made a significant investment on the building this year by spending £30k on chairs and refurbishing the floors.
4. Only three years ago we made a £12k profit and this is the first time in five years that we have made a deficit. Chris pointed out that the last big deficit was in 2013 (£5.5k). We need to have reserves to pay our way for six months and we currently do have these.

5. We're facing a subsidence repair bill in the chapel. Beverly is hoping we may now be eligible for grant funding due to the church itself is becoming more of a community resource.

### 3.1.3 Choral Scholars

In September 2019 we took on three choral scholars who we expected to pay through to July this year. When we closed the church, we stopped paying the scholars. Beverly has looked at their role description and although we are not obliged to pay them, do we have a moral responsibility to pay them?

Martyn, Marguerite, Rebecca and Carolyn all voiced their agreement that we should pay the scholars to July 2020.

Robin questioned where the fund is represented in the accounts and Chris explained that it is within the creditors.

**Proposal:** That we pay the scholars the for the rest of the academic year ending July 2020.

**Proposed:** Rebecca Brown, **Seconded:** Marguerite Barclay. All in favour.

Carolyn asked whether we should still be receiving donations for the scholars.

**Action Finance Vision Group:** to look at who has donated and what steps we need to take in that area.

Beverly thanked Chris and the Finance Vision Group for their hard work.

### 3.2. Worship Vision Group

Beverly presented a report from the group.

- We have moved from our fully online services, through a gradual reopening and into fully open from Sept with three services per Sunday. The attendance numbers currently make all of the services viable. The 8am attendance is down a little whilst the 4pm service is becoming established with a dozen on average. We have seen some new people coming too. The group thinks we should maintain the current pattern of worship for the foreseeable future.

The 10am service is sometimes a hybrid service (with people attending via Zoom). Beverly thanked Trish and the Production Team for this. We will continue to do a hybrid service approximately twice a month.

There is a team being formed to help plan and deliver the 4pm tea-time service.

- Looking forward we have some large services coming up; the Patronal festival with choral evensong and Remembrance Sunday. The uniformed organisations are not attending but we are inviting individual representatives. We will need to ticket the larger services to maintain safety.
- Queen Eleanor's School have had four harvest festival services and plan to have four prayer spaces in November. They are also keen to come for four Christmas services (in preference to the Cathedral)
- Within the worship space there has been much change with the arrival of the chairs, an increase in bookings and the installation of the new window design (with thanks to Jo for that). We also have the flower team back in church.
- The Pilgrim Course going really well. We have run two of the series of eight with between 25 to 30 people attending. We plan to start the third course in November.

Martyn commented on how encouraging the interaction with Queen Eleanor's is and suggested that we could invite a couple of Onslow teachers to some of these services to witness them.

#### **Action Beverly**

Rebecca offered thanks to Trish regarding the hybrid services and the communications that are sent out.

Simon asked that Paddy thanks Amber for the amazing job she is doing in her new role.

Henrietta reiterated that we are working hard to keep people safe with monitoring of attendance numbers and social distancing.

### 3.3. Premises Vision Group

The premises report covers a number of areas of work, and Robin brought our attention to couple of points.

- *Water ingress*  
We still have water coming into the Reading Room through the external door. We're not clear on the next steps as we have tried our own, the installer's and the manufacturer's remedies but none have

worked.

One leg of the bell tower is still leaking in the foyer. Dave Mowat has made huge efforts to stop this, but we need to continue to find a solution.

- *Subsidence in chapel*

This has become more worrying of late. We don't know the absolute cause and it is likely to be a combination of factors. We have found, via a camera drain survey, that there is a broken drain at the side of the chapel where a downpipe empties. There looked to be tree roots in drain. It's possible that we might be able to make an insurance claim for that. The bricks of the chapel wall have moved downhill and outwards and this has a large effect on how we underpin and redo the chapel floor. The work for this is estimated to be in the region of £35k. We are in regular contact with structural engineer and architect and we'll probably need to make decisions at the end of the year.

We will be filling the gap next to chapel window with a post to hide the gap and prop up the ceiling.

- *Thorn Bank*

We had feared we'd need to replace the boiler at Thorn Bank, but we have found that it can be repaired. The tenant has agreed to stay another year.

Rob Burch suggested that when the Thorn Bank boiler does need to be replaced, we should consider replacing with an ecologically sound solution. The Eco Vision Group can research this and any grants that may be available.

**Action Eco Vision Group** to investigate.

Rob Crossingham asked about the pattern of movement in the chapel area. Robin explained that there has been recent movement due to the dry summer. Other tell-tales have moved less although we are seeing some cracks in church now. We have had three meetings with the structural engineer and his advice is that we should continue monitoring for three or four more months. In terms of remedial schemes, we are looking at underpinning all around the side of the chapel, but the depth is not yet known. We will do remedial work to the drain soon.

Beverly offered her thanks to Robin.

Carolyn explained that we need to inform our neighbours around the field of the work we are planning to do towards the bottom of the field. We also

need to communicate regarding rights of access, as more gates appear on the boundary. Rob Crossingham and Carolyn have talked this through and have agreed that as the field is held in trust by Diocese, we need to discuss any letter with the Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF). Carolyn is drafting a letter to be reviewed by Beverly, Premises Vision Group and the DBF before sending out.

#### **4. Transforming Church Plan**

There was a brief review of the skeleton new plan that currently includes a few new goals. The Vision Group chairs are encouraged to let Trish know of goals they would like to see included in the plan.

Marguerite commented that in the original document from the Diocese, transformation is identified as “a change in condition, nature or character”. When we review what we are doing under the various goals that we have identified we want to meet, we should then be able to identify what changes in condition, nature or character have been achieved. We need to evidence change in the way of transformation. Using the Pilgrim course as an example, we could ask participants “What, if any, change to your life has attending the Pilgrim course made?”

Henrietta agreed that we should document the outcomes and feedback.

**Action All:** to look at in more detail at our away morning in November.

#### **5. Vicar’s Report**

Beverly reported on the time since our last PCC in July:

- Much of what I would want to report is covered in the Worship VG update for this evening. We’ve reopened the church building for Worship on the 13th July, starting with Morning Prayer, the Thursday Communion and Tea Time Church. Then from the beginning of September we’ve held all our Services in Church again, including the 8am and 10am Services on Sundays. The 10am is now a ‘hybrid’ Service, in Church and via Zoom. The Safeguarding Team has taken great care to make our Services in church ‘Covid safe’, and with the Wardens support and guidance people have adhered to all the requirements. I’m pleased that the ‘Three Services on Sundays’ pattern (8am, 10am and 4pm) is becoming established, and the new pattern at 10am (Service of the Word on 1st and 3rd Sundays with a Music Group) has got off to a good start. Numbers of people attending all our Service, including via Zoom have been encouraging.

- Obviously, we're facing some financial challenges (which we've heard about this evening), and some challenges with the building (subsidence). I'm grateful to the Finance VG, and also the Premises VG for their work; and I'm aware that as a PCC we'll need to give these issues priority in the coming months.
- Further afield: I'm encouraged by our partnership with Queen Eleanor School in particular, and the new opportunities to welcome pupils and staff into our Church regularly. I've also recently taken on the role as Interim Chair of Governors, while a new Chair is found; that too has given me new opportunities to support the school, and encourage its distinctly Christian ethos.
- My role as Assistant Area Dean continues. There are two aspects of the role: Deanery Synod (3 meetings a year for Clergy and Deanery Synod reps); and Deanery Chapter (monthly meetings for Clergy in the Guildford Deanery). My role is both strategic and pastoral, working alongside and supporting Nick Williams as Area Dean.
- I'm looking forward to our PCC Away Morning on the 21st November. Julian Hubbard will be leading us in 'reflective hour'; and we'll also have an hour to look more widely at our Transforming Church Goals. We'll meet in Church from 10.30am – 12.45pm.

Henrietta offered thanks to Beverly for all she has done.

Simon Moulden suggested that at our away morning we should reflect on whether we are stretching ourselves too much and whether we're using scant resources in the right way, particularly as Beverly is so busy.

## **6. Safeguarding**

Julie reported that most of the recent work has be COVID related. The Safeguarding Team are meeting monthly and trying to look ahead to areas of concern, e.g. large services. We review the church COVID risk assessment at each meeting.

Julie will be chasing people about training that is available online. Please do get it done if you get asked.

With regard to Children's Church, we have provided an online youth group for the older one. For the smaller children, we are providing personalised activity packs each week. Face to face group work would be a disproportionate amount of work for the numbers involved.

Beverly offered her thanks to Julie and the Safeguarding team.

Robin asked if the recent report by the Church of England would have any effect on us. Julie responded that if people have any concerns, they usually contact her in the first instance.

## 7. Dates and Events

Eve explained a possible event we could hold for Christmas, namely an 'Online Christmas Fayre'. We would ask volunteers to make festive items that we can then sell online and deliver to the doorstep.

**Proposed:** Paddy Payne; **Seconded:** Simon Moulden; All in favour.

## 8. Dates of future meetings

Standing Committee – 17th November 2020

PCC Away Morning – 21st November 2020, 10.30-12.45 in church

## PART 2 (*Confidential items*)

(none)

**Note:** The [Parish Safeguarding Handbook](#) is referenced here for your convenience.

Minutes approved on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Signed: