



Minutes of PCC Meeting Tuesday 23rd January 2024 at 1930

Present: Howard Wright, David Duffin, Andrew Walters, Janet Foster, Pauline Hughes, Claire MacPherson (Treasurer), Frank Maloney, Pam Maloney, Bob Meekums, Doug Titheridge, Jane Hughes (guest)

1. Welcome and Apologies

Howard Wright welcomed everyone to the first PCC meeting of 2024

Apologies were received from Timothy James, David and Jill Williams and Rich Gillard.

2. Worship & Prayer

Howard led us in worship and prayer

3. Declarations of (financial) Interest

None

4. PCC – meeting of 21st November 2023

- a. Approval of Minutes – approved *nem con*.
- b. Matters Arising from previous meetings- None

5. Youth and Children's Worker

a. Response to advertisements

Three of the five applicants who had replied to the second advertisement, were interviewed by Zoom and a preferred candidate selected. An unfortunate change in personal circumstances meant it was not thought appropriate to appoint the preferred candidate at this time. The post would therefore be re-advertised.

b. Maintaining current situation

Howard asked that we pray for the team of volunteers currently managing Kids Church. They had coped well during the youth worker interregnum which has lasted longer than expected but they need support and additional volunteers. As well as his duties at Medstead, Howard's workload has increased further due to the need to help with youth and kids church. Howard will discuss the situation with the Area Dean (Andrew Mickleham of POTR) to see whether there might be the possibility of sharing some of their resources, ideally an associate priest. It was noted that we have the highest parish population to 'priestly' resource of any of the deanery benefices.

6. Update on Discussions with St Andrew's, Medstead

a. Church Commissioners' decision

The Church Commissioners have approved the scheme but objectors have until 5th Feb to register a wish to appeal and then 28 further days to assemble their reasons for appeal.

b. What next?

Depending on whether the Church Commissioners grant an appeal, possible dates for a special parochial meeting are:

19 March

16 or 23 April

21 May

Brief APCMs to sign off the accounts would need to be held by both churches – probably on the same day as the SPCM.

7. Finance

a. Financial Statement, 1st January to 31st December 2023

Claire presented report and commentary documents:

PCC Report Dec 23.xlsx; PCC Report CommentaryDec 23.pdf

We ended the year with a surplus of £5878 as against a projected deficit of £32K. The improved situation was due to an increase in one off donations and the effect of HMRC allowances in respect of maternity pay plus savings from not being able to appoint a Youth and Children's worker.

The situation with regard to electricity supply and payment is being resolved. The direct debit to the supplier has been temporarily cancelled. We have compared our own meter readings with those of the supplier and these now seem to equate. We have made a one-off payment of £4,300 for historic use of electricity. Once we are confident that bills are in line with consumption the direct debit will be restored but it should be noted that, although we have re-joined dioceses bulk purchase scheme, electricity bills this winter are considerably higher than historically due to the cold weather and increased prices.

We continue to show unrestricted funds available at around £70 k meaning we are within our reserves policy, However, despite the end of year surplus we are currently running at an average monthly deficit of £2k.

b. Draft budget for 2024

Claire presented her draft budget and commentary documents:

2024 Budget draft 1.xlsx; Budget Commentary 2024.pdf

The budget shows a predicted deficit of £44k. Projected income is based on known regular monthly donations (which have increased by about £1,000 a month) and average unplanned income. It does not include possible one-off donations.

Projected expenditure includes costs of employing a Youth Worker from April; the cost of roof repairs presented at the November PCC meeting; our contribution to CMF (110k for 2024); £100 per month for Karamoja; staff salary increases.

The budget does not allow for any costs for kitchen upgrade works or the installation of solar panels.

Claire pointed out that based on current budget figures we would expect to be unable to meet our reserves policy by August 2024.

Following some discussion including alternative ways of funding particular projects or mission giving such as one-off social events or appeals to the congregation, Howard proposed the budget be approved. Frank Maloney seconded. The budget was approved unanimously but members acknowledged the need for some minor adjustments including to Messy Church funding.

Members thanked Claire for her hard work and congratulated her on her accurate forecasting of expenditure in 2023,

c. COGS tithe options

COGS historically has given 10% of income to a number of organisations. This lapsed in 2020 due to perceived budget constraints. In 2023 we resumed donations of £100 pm to Karamoja.

Medstead does not currently have a policy of giving. There is a substantial projected forecast deficit for 2024 but Howard pointed out that we need to balance prudent stewardship with faith. Forecast deficits have not always materialised in the past and we are currently holding more funds than our reserves policy requires.

Howard proposed that we:

(i) increase giving Karamoja to £200 pm;

(ii) begin work towards sponsoring International Needs UK £200pm

(iii) anticipate supporting Ali Beckett on her return to Malawi initially also at £200k

(iv) gather a team to consider partnering with additional organisations in the future, adding two more gifts by the end of 2024 and return to 10% in 2025.

The proposal was seconded by Frank Maloney. The proposal was agreed by a majority vote. (8 in favour, 1 abstention).

COGS Surplus Funds

Howard further proposed that we give back surplus funds (those funds we hold over our reserves policy and our day to day running requirements) by earmarking funding for solar panels (see 8b(ii) below) and the kitchen refurbishment through an additional line in the budget forecast. Some members would be appointed to research and bring future proposals for improvements to catering facilities.

Pam Maloney seconded the proposal which was agreed by a majority vote (8 in favour, one abstention).

8. Teams

a. Personnel:

i. Review of Matt's workload – volunteer?

The job description is in train and the job will be advertised as soon as it is finalised.

- ii. Trial of *Church suite*
Matt is working with the program. The staff feeling is that when fully operational, the program will be very helpful.
- b. Building:
 - i. Quinquennial review
David Duffin spoke about the report:
Quinquennial Inspection Report - Church of the Good Shepherd, Four Marks 2022.pdf
Many of the points made in the report have already been addressed including some of the repairs to the tower. None of the remaining issues are urgent.
 - ii. Progress on solar panels
Following the decisions at 7c, David Duffin will contact the contractor to ascertain current costs and possible installation dates. These would need to be approved by PCC members and signed off by the Diocese. There is a possibility that this could go ahead within a few months at which point the necessary funds will need to be available.
- c. Ministry Leaders: review with Pastoral reorganisation
This will take place after the parish reorganisation

9. Safeguarding

No issues to report.

10. Health and Safety

There have been two minor injury incidents neither of which requires further action. The fire alarm and the emergency lighting were tested on 16th December 2023 and 17th January 2024.

11. Any Other Business

None

12. Dates of next meeting

PCC: Tuesday 19th March 2024, 7.30pm