



Minutes of PCC Meeting Tuesday 5th October 2021 at 19:30 In person and on Zoom

Present: Howard Wright, Jonathan Rooke (z) (joined at item 6b), Andy Walters, David Craigen, Vicky Efstathiou (z), Pip Hughes, Timothy James, Pam Maloney, Bob Meekums, Abi Mezzullo, Mike Saltmarsh (z), Howard Short, Jill Williams, Jane Hughes (guest), David Williams (secretary).

1. Welcome & Apologies.

Howard welcomed the team to the fifth meeting of 2021.

Apologies were received from David Duffin, Janet Foster, Rich Gillard and Lorna Littlewood.

2. Worship & Prayer

Howard read from Genesis 45:4-7 – Joseph reveals himself to his family. Joseph had set aside his teenage arrogance. He saw God's hand at work in his life delivering him through times of testing and suffering. He had grown in *Wisdom, Business Acumen* and *Courageous Faith*. So must we.

Howard and three others led the meeting in prayer.

3. Declarations of (financial) Interest

Jane said that she would withdraw from discussion of item 6c which would likely include discussion about financial implication of staff salaries.

4. PCC – 13th July 2021

a. Approval of Minutes: Agreed and signed off.

b. Matters Arising from Previous Meetings:

i. Ongoing safeguarding matter: nothing new to report. Insurers are committed to covering costs of any further proceedings. Meanwhile we should pray for peace and understanding by all parties.

ii. Publication of minutes: Copies of recent PCC and APCM minutes were presented for signature and will be placed in the Church Office and on the church website.

DW/
MattS

5. Future Strategy Team Progress

Abi opened discussion by expression the appreciation of the team for Lorna's leadership and efficiency while running the group.

Survey responses had given useful direction for the team meetings. We can delegate some matters to individuals already focussed on the areas concerned: e.g.

- Developing small groups further as core ministry, to Val Lucas.
- Reviewing internal and external communications, to the Staff Team.

HW

A special PCC meeting will be convened on Tuesday 26th October to discuss the report in more detail. Members are encouraged to email feedback and further questions to the Strategy Team before that event. The team will then produce a new video to inform the Church of progress to date and what we are looking to do next.

LL

PCC placed on record its thanks to the team in general and to Lorna in particular for all their efforts and for such an informative report.

6. Finance

- a. Policy on spending limits (*Expenditure Policy Sept draft 2021.docx*)
The proposed policy setting limits on authorisation of different levels of expenditure was approved *nem con*.
- b. Live-streaming Project
0930 services have been live-streamed since the beginning of September. Feedback from church-members who are shielding had been encouraging – they felt much more involved in the service than they had using YouTube videos.

The burden of operating presently falls on Matt Senior. We should support him in identifying and training more operators in addition to those on sound and EasyWorship to share the task from week to week.

MattS

Total cost of necessary additional equipment would be about £2.2k, of which about half had already been spent. Two anonymous donations had been received:

- i. covering the full cost of the Live-stream equipment.
 - ii. covering the cost of a replacement for the failing Roland keyboard.
- c. Financial shortfall and Budget 2022
(docs: *PCC Summary Jan_August 2021* and *Draft Budget 2022 for Oct PCC*)
 - i. Several members are increasing their regular giving as a result of the information provided by David C in the September Parish Magazine and notice-sheets. Another has recently had to decrease their contribution. With these in mind, projected deficit for 2021 is £20k, or about 10% of turnover.
 - ii. 2022 Budget has been drafted assuming a similar income to the current (i.e., adjusted) regular donation level. Application has been made to the Diocese to freeze COGS Common Mission Fund (CMF) contribution for 2022 at 2021 level, and approval is awaited.
 - iii. Two versions of the provisional Draft Budget for 2022 have been prepared, the only difference reflecting as an assumption whether or not tithing by the church continues into 2022.
 - Continuation of tithing – forecast deficit by year-end 2022 about £40k. i.e., below level specified in COGS Reserves Policy.
 - Suspended policy as regards tithing – forecast deficit by year-end 2022 around £20k.Both versions assume slightly raised level of expenditure as COVID restrictions on activity are progressively lifted.

- d. Tithing and Mission-giving
The four realistic options to achieve a sustainable balance are:
 - to increase income; every member should be encouraged as they are able to contribute to make up the shortfall by increasing planned regular giving.
 - to reduce the number of employees; but each plays a vital role in furthering the mission of COGS to our community (see also item 9d)
 - to suspend COGS practice of tithing income for 2022; though some of the twelve 'Missions of the month' are nationally supported, some of the smaller missions receive a very significant proportion of their total income from COGS.
 - to reduce COGS CMF contribution – currently COGS is receiving less than it contributes, thus subsidising other parishes. Diocese could in principle ask for more, not less.

After considerable discussion, it was reluctantly proposed, by David C seconded by Mike S, that for 2022 COGS will suspend tithing of church income for one year and review again in October 2022. The proposal was supported by **8**, opposed by **5** with **2** abstentions. (Note: following the circulation of these minutes it was recognised

DC/HW/JW

that though 15 votes had been recorded, only 14 members were present and eligible to vote. Each of the 14 was asked to report to the Secretary how they had voted at the meeting. Returns indicated that **6** supported the proposal, **6** opposed it and **2** abstained. The issue will be raised again at the next regular meeting.)

PCC committed further to encourage members of congregation:

- to meet to pray together and individually about finances,
- to continue to review and, where possible, to raise their giving.

7. Diocesan Restructuring

- a. Further contacts with St Andrews
 - i. Sunday services: COGS has taken responsibility for supporting St. Andrew's during their interregnum and are providing a priest and preacher for their 11am services on 1st and 3rd Sundays and an 8am on the 2nd Sunday of each month.
 - ii. Other contacts: A new PCC, Secretary and Treasurer have taken office at St Andrew's. Howard W's meetings with them have been encouraging, with a renewed sense of unity.
 - iii. After the original proposal of a single parish with two churches but one PCC, an alternative of a single Benefice with two separate Parish churches and PCCs has been mentioned by the archdeacon. COGS PCC did not favour this proposal, observing that the original was designed to reduce, not increase, the number of PCCs and associate councils and committees and the consequent load on the remaining clergy.

8. Other Diocesan Matters

- a. Diocesan Carbon Zero strategy
Mike S to bring a paper to the meeting of 9th November
- b. Protect Duty
Nothing to report.
- c. Issues around Diocesan personnel
See *Diocese of Winchester – update docs* 20th Sept and 1st October

MikeS

9. Other Teams

- a. Personnel:
Additional team member. Howard W to continue the search.
- b. Building:
Hall kitchen has been repainted
- c. Ministry Leaders: update from meeting 6th July.
Nothing to report to PCC.
- d. Mission Team:
The Harvest Offering (including Gift Aid) for Tearfund to date amounted to £2390. In view of the decision to suspend tithing for 2022, it was agreed that we put in place special activity to raise funds for Karamoja.

HW

Deanery Synod has asked for parishes to consider changing our special fund- raising from supporting Karamoja to work in the Democratic Republic of Congo. General feeling of this meeting is to continue to support Karamoja.

Deanery Synod had also encouraged its member churches to engage actively in outreach mission. As two of the main thrusts of COGS mission are through the coordinating activities of the Children and Families Workers, this provides further reason for continuing to support our whole staff team.

10. Safeguarding

Nothing to report from Safeguarding Officer.

11. Health and Safety

- a. Risk assessment for in-building worship
(doc attached - *RA Covid Public Worship - Sep 6 2021 v11-fjm.docx*)
Report accepted with thanks.
- b. PAT testing
PCC expressed its gratitude to David and Janet Foster for carrying out and reporting on required testing of electrical equipment at no cost to the Church.

12. Any Other Business

- a. Rod Eckles is inviting COGS to participate in Alton on 30th October in a *Vigil of Hope*, marking the run-up to the Climate Action conference COP26. **JW**
- b. Fund-raising for the present Village Hall
As a user of the Village Hall, COGS is invited to help raise funds towards present repairs. PCC asked Frank Maloney to consider how best we might contribute.
- c. A letter has been received about wearing of masks in public worship. Howard reminded PCC that this is a matter of love and grace to those around us, as well as being a recommendation from church and secular authorities.

13. Dates of next meetings

- 9th November 2021 (inc. Pastoral reorganisation & following up Resourcing)
- 30th November 2021 (inc. Budget decision)

Howard W closed the meeting with prayer at 9.45 pm.
