



Minutes of Parochial Church Council Meeting

Monday September 20th 2021 - 7pm at Rothley Parish Church

Present:

Revd. Rob Gladstone (chair), David Wilson, Sue Wilson, Wendy Ferguson, Ray Prince, Margaret Leverment, David Hodgson, Fred Sleath, Margaret Rouse, Alison Parkinson, Jonty Pilbeam, Chris Garnett, Linda Poole, Susan Pinkus (secretary)

1. Opening Prayers/Reading

Rob read from Psalm 19, focusing on: How can we live 'rightly' in the world given to us?

2. Declarations of Interest: None

Apologies: Alison Godfrey, Wendy Lewis, Liz Barker, Jenny Pilbeam

Accuracy/Approval of minutes from July 5th 2021: Agreed as an accurate record.

Matters arising: None. All actions completed.

3. Finance

Sue Wilson reported to the PCC.

The latest Finance Report and accounts show that income, expenditure and expected deficit are all running under budget for this year. Although the expected year-end position is improved from the budget, Sue thought it was likely that we could end the year overspent by about £5,000.

She asked us to consider the following important points:

- We give away around £13,000 each year to local, national and international mission through our annual tithe.
- Our Parish Contribution to the Diocese of Leicester, decided by us, is very generous in comparative terms.
- We have separate additional funds for our work with children, school, families and youth.
- The church's finance team already try to control expenditure as far as is possible or desirable, so asking the congregation to consider increasing their giving – which we haven't done directly since 2017 – may be the only option to balance our books, if not in 2021, then in 2022.

Sue then asked for questions or comments on the current year's figures.

The draft budget for 2022, which does not need to be finalised until the November meeting, shows a possible deficit of just under £10,000. When this is added to this year's possible

deficit of £5,000, that amounts to a potential loss of £15,000 over the two years. Within the 2022 budget, we need to decide on our Parish Contribution offer for 2022 – and members received the paperwork sent from the diocese prior to the meeting. In the past few years, dating back before COVID, the diocese has received insufficient income to pay for its current level of ministry provision throughout the diocese. To balance its books, the diocese has needed to sell some of its reserves. This situation is not sustainable in the long term. COVID has worsened the situation and accelerated the need to find solutions.

Our draft budget for 2022 includes the current Parish Contribution figure, so any change will affect that budget. The amount each church in the diocese pays in Parish Contribution is not objectively allocated, but has arisen as the result of what each church has felt able or willing to pay over many years. We have tended to increase year on year in an attempt to support diocesan finances, hence we now contribute one of the highest amounts in the diocese, but our increases have usually been nullified by reductions by other churches. An objective figure per stipendiary minister has been included in the leaflet *In Your Hands*, with the warning that there are other costs which really should be shared out and included in the overall total – Sue suggested that the appropriate figure mentioned by the diocesan finance team is £65,000 per unit of full-time stipendiary ministry. However, she was not sure whether eventually some contribution from us for our licensed Readers would also be expected, even though they are unpaid volunteers. The use of this *Cost of Ministry* was agreed by Diocesan Synod earlier this year. Sue expected it to be used to guide parishes in their Parish Contribution offers for 2022 as it would have provided a clear indication about where help or change is needed, but this has not been put into effect yet.

As we seek to decide our Parish Contribution offer for 2022, we were asked to consider both our own church finances and those of the diocese, and, while we do that, to be **generous, realistic and prayerful** – and to give our reasons for our decision.

The PCC was then directed to decide whether we wish to increase, decrease or retain our Parish Contribution offer for 2022, whilst bearing in mind that even without an increase, we are likely to be in deficit by £15,000 at the end of 2022 unless we ask our congregation to increase their giving.

Following a discussion, a secret ballot was held and it was decided by an almost 2/3 majority that we would not increase our contribution this year but retain the same level as last year i.e. no decrease either.

Rob thanked Sue and the Finance team on behalf of the PCC.

4. Service pattern going forward

It had been agreed at the last PCC that our current experimental pattern would run until December 2021 with the addition of ‘special’ services as needed/relevant in the Church calendar.

The PCC will now need to decide the pattern for January 2022 onwards at the next PCC meeting in November so that details can be published to the wider community, for example on the Church Christmas Card

Several members of the congregation are missing the 6pm evening service and it was suggested that we may consider a 'said' evening service at 6pm after half term. It was also suggested that we might, in the future, offer some flexibility with the evening service to have guest speakers or Youth-led services

5. Safeguarding

Wendy Ferguson updated the PCC on current changes to the safeguarding requirements. A fully detailed and comprehensive paper was sent out prior to this meeting. It was emphasised that there needs to be a much more efficient flow of information and a raised awareness of safeguarding in church. Training requirements have changed but there is still a legal requirement for all members of the PCC to complete their safeguarding training.

Action: Those members of PCC still to complete training please liaise with Wendy F and /or Kate C to complete or update.

Leadership training has changed a lot and the decision as to who needs to do it now rests with the clergy and the PCC. We need to identify those who need to undertake Leadership Training and also ensure we are using safer recruitment processes.

All courses are completed online using the Church of England Safeguarding Portal, <https://safeguardingtraining.cofeportal.org>.

At the moment Wendy is not in possession of a list of names of people acting as leaders of groups of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Action: RG/FS/MR/LS

A list of all those running face-to-face groups involving children, young people and vulnerable adults needs to be sent directly to Wendy F and/or Kate C.

The PCC agreed the four actions in the Safeguarding Plan for 2021.

6. Bells

The PCC appointed Charles Poole as Tower Captain and Harry Longman as Bell Ringing Trainer. We have brought our oversight of bellringing up to date with the introduction of a new constitution which covers all aspects of safeguarding and safer recruitment. It is hoped that it will now be possible to make more connections with the school and wider community.

7. Foundation Governors

Regarding the two vacancies for Foundation Governors on the governing body of Rothley Primary Academy, we have had two people express an interest and the processes involved to appoint them have been started.

8. Communications

It is now a matter of some urgency that this item is taken forward. There is a need to be creative and imaginative in our **strategy** but also address the **practical** requirements going forwards.

After input and discussion, it was decided that we need to put something in the Fellowship Post to search out suitable volunteers to address this issue. We need to spell out the requirements for both aspects of this work and we need a leader to oversee it.

- 1) Communications Strategy - meeting with Administrator and Vicar to plan what needs communicating and how
- 2) Communications delivery - doing the technical work to put the above into practice and overseeing Church AV

Action:

MR/SW/ AP/LS to draw up an advertisement for the Fellowship Post.

9. Operations Report (includes Health and Safety)

Linda Poole reported back on the progress with the refurbishments in the Old School Rooms. These are now nearly complete. Final tasks include new radiator covers which are on order and will hopefully arrive before we have to turn the heating on.

The PCC thanked Linda Poole for spearheading this project. There have been lots of positive comments so far.

Our Church Building Manager, Ray Prince, reported on the progress of several points of maintenance and improvement which are currently ongoing.

The PCC agreed to finance electrical work which needs doing to the amplifier switch quite urgently (£600).

A key holder list has now been drawn up and there are now some spare keys in the Church safe.

In the churchyard Charnwood Borough Council have paid for repairs to the church wall and the straightening of headstones.

The tree which was overhanging a neighbouring garden has been attended to by Charnwood Borough Council and is now safe.

Re the removal of the Boiler House, we await drawings from the architect.

10. Discipleship and Send

Discipleship minutes were sent out with the paperwork prior to this meeting and Send have not met since the last PCC meeting.

11. Vicar's Report

Please see report sent out prior to meeting. Nothing to add that hasn't already been covered in this meeting so far.

12. Shaped by God Together Update

David Wilson provided an update on this diocesan initiative.

Details are available through Diomail or on the Diocesan website - extract below:

'In July Extended Bishops Council considered three possible ministry models and the extensive feedback from Local Conversations across the diocese. They asked for a fusion of models A (Minster) and B (Mission Area), taking into account the positives of each, alongside the elements of concern and apprehension, to form a diocesan framework. This was developed and brought to a further Extended Bishops Council meeting in September. The Diocesan Framework commended by Bishops Council provides the structure, within the resource constraints of people, finance and buildings, that allows local parishes, Fresh Expressions of Church (FxC), chaplaincies, Education centres & Schools to work together to discern and deliver their shared calling to reveal the Kingdom of God through: Growing the number of disciples, Nurturing the depth of discipleship, Engaging in loving service of the world. '

Models A and B have now been merged and a new framework (Minster Communities) was put to Bishop's Council last week. It is proposed that by 2026 the Diocese will be carved up into 20 or 25 areas and that each area will include churches, schools, clergy and lay leaders. A major rationale behind these changes is to address the debt facing the Diocese post-COVID. David pointed out that parishes will still exist in this model and will retain some autonomy withing the new groupings. Diocesan Synod will meet on October 9th to discuss and take further.

The meeting closed at 21.00 with a prayer of thanks led by Fred Sleath.

NEXT MEETINGS:

PCC MEETING MONDAY 22nd November 7pm in Church

Please note, reports for the PCC meeting must be sent to Susan Pinkus by **SUNDAY 7th November** in order to assist the Business Committee in preparing the PCC agenda.

BUSINESS COMMITTEE WEDNESDAY 10th November 7pm: 56 Grangefields Drive

Thank you.

SusanPinkus September 29th 2021