



Minutes of the Parochial Church Council held on Tuesday 4 April, 2017

Present: Fr Philip Chester, Jonathan Aitken, Melanie de Blank, Maria Gayle-Rogers, Fr Peter Hanaway, Fr Jamie Johnston, Jane Kennedy, Simon Lello, Abi Omotoso, Rachel Whittaker, Toby York.

Isaiah Atwiine (Pastoral Assistant), Nigel Groome (Director of Music) and Claire Pinney (Administrator) were in attendance.

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received Mary Brown, Alastair Callcutt, Grace Hoskin, Susan Lowson, Eithne Risner, Miriam Cook, Rachel Jewitt, Ryan Williams.

2 Minutes of the Meeting held on 1 February 2017

The minutes were agreed and signed as a true record.

3 Matters arising *not covered by the Agenda*

10.2 Jane Kennedy had found some pictures of the church at the time of the fire in the library and needed to find more for a display for the anniversary of the fire in the basement.

4 Report of the Parish Priest

4.1 Pigeon deterrent - Fr Philip would present a formal proposal at a future meeting.

4.2 Legilium - A design for a legilium had been received from Michael Leal Woodcarving. Problems regarding the position of the microphone needed to be addressed together with a tilt or a small a step for shorter people. Fr Philip would visit the workshop with another member of the PCC. The legilium would be funded through a donation.

A proposal to petition for a faculty for the legilium, subject to modifications, was proposed by Jonathan Aitken, seconded by Rachel Whittaker and agreed by the PCC.

4.3 Holy Week – New signs had been produced to advertise the Holy Week activities on the outside of the church and in the narthex. The forecourt project should be able to proceed in due course.

It was suggested that an indication that St Matthew's was an Anglican church should be included in the signage/publicity.

4.4 Lent podcasts – Fr Philip thanked Fr Jamie, Toby, Nigel and Isaiah for all their work on the podcasts. They had been appreciated from across the world. They were



sent to 600 people and 40% of the recipients accessed them each day. The podcasts had generated 200 extra visits to the website per day. This success indicated that social media was critical for communication.

5 Annual Report for approval

Fr Philip thanked Toby and all those who had contributed to the annual report. The financial statements had not changed significantly since the presentation of the draft accounts to the PCC in February. The only changes followed suggestions made by the independent examiner, resulting in an increase in the net surplus of approximately £5,000.

Toby York explained that another issue raised by the independent examination was that, due to changes in accounting regulations through the mandatory adoption of FRS 102, certain assets which had previously been valued at zero cost in the accounts, could be included at their market value as at 1st January 2015.

Toby reported that it had always been the understanding of the incumbent, Churchwardens and PCC that the Clergy House was owned by the Trevelyan Trust, a controlled trust of the PCC. It is also, apart from the church itself which is not covered by the accounting regulations, the PCC's single most important and valuable asset. The Standing Committee considered that including its value in the accounts would better reflect the fact that the Clergy House was part of the resources of the parish. Of the three firms Toby had approached, the cheapest quote was from Mann Smith for £6,500 (excluding VAT). It was about 50% of a commercial fee for a valuation exercise of this scale and Toby reported that it was affordable. There was some discussion regarding the merits of this proposal after which Fr Philip proposed the valuation be undertaken, and the proposal was agreed, *nem con*, by the PCC.

Subject to the inclusion of the market value of the Clergy House, approval of the annual report was proposed by Simon Lello, seconded by Melanie de Blank and agreed by the PCC.

6 Discussion on mission

Fr Jamie gave an interesting introduction to the subject of mission, placing it in the context of major reports over the last decade and explaining that it was not just linked to a growth in numbers but also spiritual growth and depth. The 'missio Dei' consisted of finding out what God was doing and joining in. Fr Jamie considered that the church offered 'community' at a time when there were more people living alone than ever before.

Members of the PCC were then asked to write down their suggestions for missional activities that St Matthew's could offer and discuss them in pairs.

A large number of activities were suggested by the PCC which would be collated by Fr Jamie.



7 Finance

7.1 Roofing – Three estimates and detailed specifications for repairs to the roof had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was proposed by Toby York, and agreed by the PCC, to accept the estimate from Harding of £42,185.

7.2 Pastoral Assistant Programme 2017-18

Toby reported that, in line with advice from the diocese, pastoral assistants had always been treated as unpaid volunteers. The PCC paid for their accommodation and paid them a subsistence allowance in line with HMRC recommended allowances for volunteers. The HR Team at the diocese had recently modified its advice regarding the employment status of pastoral assistants, and seemed to be moving towards the idea that they were employees rather than volunteers.

If this was the case, the annual cost of each PA would rise by about £2,500 per year. Their pay would be subject to tax, and would therefore have to be increased such that they could pay their accommodation costs and receive the equivalent of their current subsistence from their net pay.

This was not just a tax issue, as the PCC must also be compliant with the minimum wage regulations and other employment issues such as the working time directive, holiday pay, sick pay, etc.

Any changes were subject to legal advice and it was a small possibility that diocesan advice could revert back later in the summer to paying the PAs a subsistence allowance.

7.3 Summary of the first quarter of financial year

It was too soon after the end of the month for accounts to be prepared, but Toby reported that PCC income and expenditure for the first quarter was broadly in line with the budget. The conference centre had had its best month ever in March, making a profit of about £17,000 although income had been lower in January and February.



8 Strategy Day - update on personal commitments

The discussion on the Strategy Day commitments would be deferred until the next PCC meeting.

9 Music Report

Nigel Groome, the Director of Music, thanked Claire for her warm welcome and help in the office. About twenty people were attending the weekly lunchtime recitals. A profit of £231 had been made on eight recitals. Nigel considered that a piano would enable the repertoire to be extended but this raised practical issues rather than financial issues. A choir from Westminster School had sung Evensong. Nine choral services were planned during Holy Week and the response to the podcasts had been worldwide.

10 School Report

The School Report was deferred until the next meeting.

11 Signage

Improvement of the signage was currently in flux as it had not been possible to start the forecourt project. Fr Philip reported that this project should be able to be started once the new owners had moved in to the adjacent building. Fr Philip planned to hold a reception for the new owners in due course.

12 Any Other Business

12.1 Safeguarding - Maria Gayle-Rogers tendered her resignation as Safeguarding Officer. Fr Philip thanked Maria for all the work she had done in this important role. Fr Philip also announced that Miriam Cook, the Children's Champion, would be leaving the parish as her husband, Daniel, had been appointed Organist of Durham Cathedral.

12.2 PCC membership - Jane Kennedy, PCC Secretary, asked members of the PCC to tell her as soon as possible if they were not willing to continue as members so that she knew the number of vacancies prior to the APCM.

12.3 Holy Week - Fr Philip encouraged the PCC to attend as many of the Holy Week events as possible. Canon Jeremy Davies would be in residence for Holy Week and the Archdeacon would be attending the Maundy Thursday service.

**13 Dates of future meetings for 2017 APCM – Sunday 7 May, Monday 5 June, Monday 17 July, Tuesday 12 September
*November meeting – date to be confirmed.***