

Major risks and financial management review

Major Risks

The PCC is responsible for identifying and responding to major risks facing the church. These are the major risks identified and considered by the PCC in 2015.

Safeguarding

The PCC discussed in detail the purposes and requirements of safeguarding procedures. The policy was considered carefully in the context of how children and vulnerable adults use the spaces at church or are otherwise on the premises. Maria Gayle-Rogers was appointed safeguarding officer and a safeguarding policy was adopted and publicised.

Fire safety

The church and buildings are covered by the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 which requires fire safety to be determined through a Fire Risk Assessment. In July 2013, the PCC commissioned a professional firm to undertake the Fire Risk Assessment which identified the risks; identified people particularly at risk; advised how to remove, reduce and protect from fire risks; advised how to record, plan, instruct, inform and train occupants; provided a list of actions and the means to review the assessment and the plans made.

The PCC made the Fire Risk Assessment a standing item on its agenda throughout 2014 and 2015. Grace Hoskin, churchwarden, took responsibility for implementing the recommendations and with the help of Claire Pinney, the church administrator, good progress has been made.

Sudden and unexpected building repairs

The church, organ and buildings are large, ageing, listed and in constant need of careful repair and restoration which is often very expensive. The organ and buildings have not benefitted from any significant spending since the major restoration in the early 1980s following the damage caused by fire. The PCC therefore considers it prudent to build reserves to meet the costs of a programme of restoration and for unexpected expenditure for building repairs.

Financial Management

The PCC has a Financial Management Policy which meets the requirements of the Charities Act 2011, the Charity Commission guidelines 'Internal Financial Controls for Charities' and 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (Revised 2005)'.

Reserves policy review

Reserves Policy

The PCC discussed the following factors in arriving at its reserves policy:

- The PCC is dependent on the continued success of the conference centre and clergy house to maintain surpluses.
- Money should only be kept in reserve for specific reasons.
- Available funds should be spent on furthering the aims of the church.
- The PCC needs to be in a position to pay its full Common Fund as soon as practicable.
- Sensible planning for unknown events is important.

The PCC will seek to keep secure the income streams from the clergy house and conference centre and therefore costs in relation to the maintenance and upkeep of those buildings remains a priority. There is also some immediate need for remedial building works (particularly to the roofs), redecoration of the church and upgrade of the church lighting and security. The cost of these works has not yet been formally tendered but is likely to be in the region of £200,000.

Policy

The PCC's policy is to keep £175,000 in general reserves to cover staff costs, working cash and unforeseen emergencies. This represents six months' church running costs (approximately £95,000) and six months' conference centre income (approximately £80,000).

In view of the state of the buildings the PCC will also add £25,000 to designated building reserves each year until there are funds of £75,000.

The current reserves (excluding the endowment fund) are £136,512 while the reserves required by the PCC's policy are £250,000. The PCC aims to eliminate the shortfall of £113,487 over the next five to seven years.

Public Benefit

The PCC has complied with its duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the Charity Commission in exercising its powers and duties.