

ST MARY THE VIRGIN, LINTON
MINUTES OF PCC MEETING HELD BY ZOOM
ON THURSDAY 13TH JANUARY 2022

PRESENT

Dr D Parry-Smith (Chair), Mrs J Burge, Miss C Ellis (Churchwarden), Mrs S Ellis (Treasurer), Mrs H Evans, Mr A Gore, Mrs S King, Mrs S Mudge (Secretary), Mr J Organ, Mrs G Powell, Mrs P Schofield, Mrs S Thorne (LLM), Mr R Tonry, Dr M Warrington, Mrs C Watts (LLM and Safeguarding Officer), Mr D Watts (Churchwarden), Revd. M Wilcockson and Mr M Younger.

1. OPENING PRAYER

David Parry-Smith opened the meeting with a Fruits of the Spirit reading and short reflection.

2. APOLOGIES

None – all present.

3. MINUTES OF 8TH NOVEMBER 2021

The minutes were approved as a true record.

4. MATTERS ARISING

None

5. SAFEGUARDING REPORT

Cathy Watts had circulated a report detailing ongoing progress. Three items require action/volunteers:

- A second adult is needed to help Michael Wilcockson with SMYG.
- Cathy requires a small lockable filing cabinet for safeguarding papers – does anyone have one spare?
- Cathy asked whether the PCC would be happy for someone to work with her as a deputy safeguarding officer and said that Michael Wilcockson had offered to do this. PCC approved this move, as long as Michael felt that he had time.

6. CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT

David Watts had circulated a report, the main points of which are as follows.

6.1. VACANCY

- Parish profile is complete and has been adopted by all five PCCs.
- Advert to be written for Church Times 28th Jan and 4th Feb. Closing date set for 18th Feb and potential interview date 24th March.
- Property officer at Diocese has notified David Watts that they hope to let the Linton Rectory by the end of January, on a short-term 6 month let.

6.2. MINISTRY TEAM

- Thanks to those people who delivered leaflets around the village to advertise Advent and Christmas activities and to everyone who helped the services run smoothly and safely.
- Ash Wednesday 2nd March – 7.30pm Eucharist and imposition of ashes.
- Mothering Sunday 27th March – Together with God service.
- Palm Sunday with Bishop Stephen at 10am has been confirmed.
- Ministry Team intends to meet soon to consider Passiontide Promise, Lent course and confirm the schedule for Holy Week services and activities.

- Looking further ahead – to consider plans for the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee weekend in early June.

6.3. VACCINATION CENTRE

- Linton Pharmacy had asked whether the church might be used as a Covid vaccination centre. The Standing Committee was supportive and David Watts sought advice from the Rural Dean, Archdeacon Alex and Geoffrey Hunter at the Diocese. In principle, this would be fine as long as no legal agreement was made which would remove control over the church building and seeking a donation rather than rent was recommended.
- The pharmacy has since had a low take up for vaccinations in the shop and is unlikely to need the church.

6.4. COVID RESTRICTIONS

- Measures in the church (masks, ventilation, sanitiser, chair spacing etc) already met the tighter restrictions imposed in December and there is no need to change anything at this stage.

6.5. OUTDOOR SOUND SYSTEM / CHASUBLE

- Additional to the written report – a proposal for a portable PA system to use at outdoor services has been sent to the F&S committee.
- Michael Wilcockson said that the St Mary’s purple chasuble was not ‘user friendly’. He has found a possible replacement on EBay for £180 – **refer to F&S.**

7. HADSTOCK

A confidential note had been circulated to PCC members.

8. APPOINTMENT OF INFANT SCHOOL GOVERNOR

Sue Mudge reported that Michael Younger’s term of office ends in March. Sue had been advised by the Diocesan Board of Education that governor vacancies falling in each school term should be addressed early in the period so that the nominations can be taken to the DBE meeting which takes place towards the end of each term. Michael was willing to stand again with a view to stepping aside when a new Rector was ready to join the Governing Body. Michael Younger was nominated by Sue Mudge, seconded by Sarah Thorne and approved by the meeting.

Action SM

9. LIVING IN LOVE AND FAITH

Michael Wilcockson had circulated a paper summarising the position in Linton regarding the Living in Love and Faith project, first started by C of E bishops in 2017. Five Sunday sermons, looking at church teaching and interpretation of the Bible, had been delivered and discussed in Lent groups. There was the opportunity to work through the LLF book in groups over the summer and a presentation was given on Sunday 10th October, followed by a questionnaire in an attempt to reach and involve more people. The paper analysed the questionnaire answers. Michael concluded that ‘discussing issues of sex, sexuality and gender is not easy but the exercise enabled the congregation to engage critically with the Bible, the Church/Anglican tradition and reason/conscience in the context of a secular society where attitudes to these matters have changed rapidly over the last fifty years’.

There were 45 questionnaires completed and it was suggested that should be put in the context of there being 70-90 regular worshippers on a Sunday. Michael Wilcockson will now add the St Mary’s logo and a date to the paper and it can be posted on the St Mary’s website and submitted to Archdeacon Alex as our church’s contribution to the wider project.

10. INCLUSIVE CHURCH

This item leads on from the LLF findings. Michael Younger introduced it at the previous meeting and it was deferred to allow more time for discussion. We say that we are an inclusive church (in the Parish Profile) – so why not go further and join the Inclusive Church organisation? Michael Younger had revised his November paper and included a resolution for the PCC:

The congregation of St Mary the Virgin aims to be an inclusive community that proclaims Christ's gospel of love, and we welcome without exception all who want to explore the possibility of faith in their lives. To make inclusivity more explicit, we support the Inclusive Church statement of belief, and seek church membership of the national Inclusive Church movement.

Before debating the resolution above, David Watts asked to put an amendment.

David proposed that the end of the second sentence be changed to read *and will continue to investigate and consider membership of the national Inclusive Church movement.*

David Parry-Smith, as chair, invited comments about the amended proposal. Some people felt that a new Rector should be involved; others that we should be demonstrating our views and joining Inclusive Church (IC) before a Rector is appointed. David Watts felt that other church members should be consulted, rather than the PCC taking the decision to join. Michael Younger responded by saying that it was his concern for others which was driving his wish to proceed without further delay and we may already be alienating people in the community without us realising.

The Chair moved to a vote on accepting the amendment to include further consideration and a timescale. There were 8 in favour of the amendment, 6 against, 4 abstentions (including the Chair) – thus the amendment was passed.

The meeting moved to debate the amended resolution. Everyone was given the chance to speak and there were a variety of views put forward; including concern over using labels, concern over exclusivity, the question of what is gained by joining IC, how do we or could we show inclusivity by actions, making a definite statement would let people know that they would be welcome.

The Chair invited Michael Younger to speak to the amended resolution. Michael welcomed the passion and clarity of thought shown by some people but reiterated his view that joining IC would make an explicit visible statement of faith and that the current amended motion simply deferred this decision unnecessarily. He thanked people for their contributions and hoped that we could move forward in a constructive way.

Voting on the amended resolution: 12 in favour, 2 against, 3 abstentions.

David Parry-Smith considered the next stage and said that there must be a plan made to consult the congregation and consider joining IC. David Watts offered to co-ordinate the process. Michael Younger suggested that the Standing Committee be asked to work on it – and 15 people were in favour of delegating to the Standing Committee.

11. REPORTS TO PCC

Reports from the Fabric committee, Children and Families team, Deanery Synod, Events committee and Beacon Youth Trust had been circulated and were taken as read with the following additional comments.

11.1. FABRIC COMMITTEE

- Recommendation to accept the lowest tender of £112,312.50 from Lodge & Sons for the QI and lighting works: proposed by Richard Tonry, seconded Andrew Gore and agreed unanimously. Can now proceed with the Faculty application and look into funding for the project.

- Recommendation to appoint Freeland Reece Roberts to do a feasibility study for the kitchenette in church, encompassing location, drainage and external storage, given that the Fabric committee had exhausted its capabilities in this area. Proposed by Richard Tonry, seconded Helene Evans - 17 in favour, 1 abstention.
- Recommendation to obtain a Faculty for removal of the side aisle pews, seconded David Watts - 18 in favour.
- PCC were pleased to accept Andrew Gore's offer to explore possible ways forward with the Diocese, regarding the parking area and roadway beyond Church Cottage. It remains Diocesan property and the tarmac has several potholes which encourage vehicles to drive onto the grass and that is now in a poor state.
- Andrew Gore suggested that a regular date for a working party for maintenance would be helpful. Second Saturdays of every other month were agreed, which would often follow PCC meetings.

11.2. FINANCE & STEWARDSHIP

Sue Ellis reported that the investment has been made, as previously agreed. No formal report scheduled for this meeting.

11.3. CHILDREN AND FAMILIES TEAM

Nothing further to add to Sarah Thorne's report but Andrew Gore wished to record thanks to Sarah for her work.

11.4. BEACON YOUTH TRUST

The final quarter report for 2021 is not yet available. It is expected that numbers of young people attending sessions will increase following the appointment of Cynthia Mukoku. She will also be able to devote time to Christian youth work.

12. DATE FOR APCM

The APCM was set for Sunday 8th May after the 10am service. This was chosen to avoid post Easter holidays and then 1st May is the Bartlow walk and a bank holiday weekend.

13. AOB

There was no AOB.

The meeting closed with prayer at 9.20pm.

Dates of future meetings: Monday 14th March.

Deanery Synod: Tuesday 29th March at Harston, Wednesday 6th July at Bartlow, Monday 7th November at Ickleton.