

St Mary the Virgin Linton

Minutes of PCC Meeting held on Monday 12th October 2015

Present:

The Revd. Dr Maggie Guite (Chair), Mrs N Blackmore, Mrs N Collard, Mrs S Ellis (Treasurer), Mr A Gore, Mr M Holden, Mr D Keys, Mrs L Mordue, Mrs S Mudge (Secretary), Mrs J Nightingale, Dr D Parry-Smith, Mrs G Powell, Mrs R Read, Mrs J Smith, Mr J Thorne (Churchwarden), Dr M Warrington (Churchwarden), Mr M Younger.

Observer: Ms Ursula Glienecke (prospective ordinand, Diocese of Europe)

1. Opening Prayer

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Mrs H Foote, Mr D Lockstone.

3. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting on 21st July 2015 were accepted and signed.

4. Matters Arising

July 2014 – item 5. Online shopping – Give As You Live scheme.

See <https://workwithus.giveasyoulive.com> for information. The link for registration needs to be circulated as widely as possible via the pew sheet and website. There are a large number of St Mary's schools and churches and our specific name is The Parochial Church Council Of The Ecclesiastical Parish Of St Mary The Virgin, Linton, Diocese Of Ely.

Some people have bought items via Give as you Live. It is easy to use, once one has joined the scheme, and it requires further promotion as a number of small contributions will eventually raise a more substantial sum.

March 2015 – item 11. Review of Guidance for Garden of Remembrance leaflet. Andrew Gore had offered to produce a number of photocopies in colour and Molly Warrington reminded Andrew that these were still required. **Action Andrew Gore**

5. Finance and Stewardship report

Michael Holden had resigned from the committee for health reasons and he was thanked for his contribution. Molly Warrington said that Hannah Foote was willing to join the committee. Hannah was proposed by David Parry-Smith, seconded by Molly and her appointment was agreed.

Documents circulated to PCC members in advance of the meeting included income and expenditure for the nine months to the end of September, the balance sheet, explanatory notes about the figures from Michael Younger, notes from the recent committee meeting from Molly Warrington and a stewardship update paper.

Regarding expenditure, Michael Younger pointed out that while spending was broadly following budget, there was still an overspend of £490 per month. The income showed a large surplus but this included £19,644 from The Friends of St Mary's for the recent church repairs. The PCC recorded their thanks to The Friends for this contribution. When The Friends' figure was removed, the income variance was £18,387 or £2,039 monthly more than anticipated when the budget was set. This was largely due to the profit from the Flower Festival, the donations from the gift weekend and the increase in regular giving as a result of the stewardship appeal.

The actual expenditure for nine months was £121,093 which exceeded the income of £112,878 by £8,205. When the budget was set, it was anticipated that the annual deficit would

be £23,923. On current figures, a deficit of around £5,000 can be expected. This is obviously good progress but a zero deficit is the ultimate aim.

The F&S committee had made a number of recommendations:

- The appointment of Hannah Foote – agreed;
- The sterling bond could remain untouched (value £41,406) as there was adequate cash in hand of £10,540 – agreed;
- The standing order to The Beacon Trust could be stopped following Barry Easton's departure – deferred until item 10 on the agenda;
- Consideration should be given to the coordination of applications to the Anderson Trust – deferred to item 9;
- A sum should be agreed for the purchase of materials for baptism / wedding / funeral preparations, as mentioned by Maggie Guite at the July meeting. David Parry-Smith proposed a sum of £200 for initial purchases, seconded by Joan Smith and agreed.
- The PCC should consider its policy on charitable giving.

This last recommendation provoked some discussion. Michael Younger explained that, for some years, it had been PCC policy to give 10% of the regular giving from worshippers to charity. Latterly the donation to The Beacon Trust to support youth work had been funded from this commitment. Michael said that guidance was needed in order to set a draft budget before the next PCC meeting. Gill Powell remarked that giving from the budget was an easy way, whereas a more transparent but harder way would be to hold specific events to raise money for nominated charities. This area could have been linked to the Marks of Mission groups but those groups were somewhat in abeyance as the Mission Action Plan was due to be considered and revised. It was agreed to continue with the existing policy of 10%.

Michael Younger moved to the stewardship campaign update paper. (Duncan Keys joined the meeting). Michael drew attention to the fact that 10 people had taken out new standing orders and 19 had increased their existing standing order, giving an increase of just over £6000 in six months, including gift aid recovered. Donations from the gift weekend, including gift aid, totalled £8,103, from 33 people. This gave an increase in income of £14,178 in 2015 and a projected increase of £12,150 in 2016, without a gift weekend. There had been little response to the follow-up letters and there were around 50 people on the electoral roll who attended services but chose not to donate regularly, neither through envelopes nor standing orders. The Linton News editor had agreed to publish an article appealing to the wider community who value the church at certain times in their lives. Michael reiterated that current levels of spending could only be sustained if the income increased, which suggests further stewardship activity is needed in 2016. A legacies policy was mentioned at a previous meeting and perhaps a covenant service would be appropriate early in the year.

In response, Maggie Guite said that her previous parish had sent an annual letter to every household and donations had been received. Maggie would be willing to preach on the theme of sacrificial and planned giving. David Parry-Smith had seen a 'Give by Text' poster in a church porch in Wells, which may appeal to younger people. David offered to investigate the process. Andrew Gore said that a standing order was taken as a starting point in the other churches in the team and people at services also put money in envelopes. A Diocesan budget guide paper had also been circulated to PCC members for information.

6. Fabric Committee Report

Quinquennial inspection – Andrew Gore said that he had an informal discussion with Chris Morse, chairman of The Friends, and it was anticipated that the Friends would be able to fund

the recommended works. On this basis, it was proposed by Gill Powell that Henry Freeland should be asked to prepare the specification for the DAC with a view to submit a faculty application, seconded by Judy Nightingale, and agreed.

Children's corner – Andrew asked whether the new position in the south aisle was working. Positive views were expressed and it was felt that items on the notice boards were more likely to be read when they were near the entrance. There was an element of concern that seating capacity was being reduced given that the choir / music group occupied the front of the north aisle. It was decided to continue with the children's corner in the south aisle for the time being. A permanent change will eventually require final permission from the Archdeacon and a faculty to move the incumbents' board.

Laurels in the churchyard – there was now some doubt as to whether the roots had affected the flint wall. The Parish Council seemed to be more concerned about creating a clear view of the church from the lane. As it is the PC's decision, Andrew will write to say that if they are removed then the PCC requests some shrubs of similar size to provide privacy in the garden of remembrance. It was also noted that the church flower arrangers would be concerned to lose all the laurels.

External notice board – Andrew had ordered the strip to add Maggie's name and contact details. Andrew recommended that Maggie and the churchwardens joined him to decide on a suitable replacement board for the longer term – agreed.

Pavilion garden shed – the Monday Gang had requested permission to relocate the shed parallel to the boundary wall – agreed.

Pavilion garden – turf had been laid and mown, hedging had been planted. Molly Warrington wished to record thanks to the Mark 5 group, to Andrew Gore and to the other volunteers who have worked in the garden and achieved such good progress.

Choir desks – David Parry-Smith had circulated photographs from other churches showing moveable choir desks and seating. David offered to research costs. The choir would be prepared to raise funds and maybe The Friends of St. Mary's would consider it a suitable project. Maggie Guite suggested that there may be a member of the DAC who would be prepared to visit and share ideas of what works well for other churches. The discussion expanded to cover other aspects of use of space in the church and it was agreed that this topic should be part of another PCC meeting.

7. Events committee report

Pam Richardson had circulated a paper commenting on the success of the coach trip to Hunstanton and the harvest lunch and listing future events and ideas. Pam was thanked for getting this initiative underway.

8. Rector's report

Communication – Maggie Guite said that she was concerned that there did not seem to be enough space across the various notice boards. The blue boards contained some out of date material. Maggie suggested that she and the churchwardens should review the use and content – agreed.

The prayer board is used but it is not apparent how requests for prayers reach the intercessions. Maggie suggested having a clip board where people could write names of the sick and departed for inclusion in prayers.

As there is currently no parish magazine, Maggie feels that she has no way of speaking to the congregation / parishioners apart from the pulpit. She would like to distribute a monthly Rector's letter.

All-age Eucharist – Baptisms are not generally offered now in the morning of a 2nd Sunday and Maggie would like to try an all-age Eucharist from January as it appears that several people are not enthused by a service of the Word. This did happen successfully some years ago.

Advent / Christmas – Maggie is considering an evening service including poetry to mark the start of Advent. For Christmas Eve, Emma Mason and Pam Richardson have suggested groups meeting at two or three points in the village, singing carols and then coming together for a short service in the church. Times and meeting points would be advertised in the Linton News. The PCC welcomed this proposal.

Worship together for the team – This will take the form of specific special services as it is difficult to find a regular Sunday morning which suits all the parishes. The next service will be All Saints Choral Evensong at Horseheath on 1st November.

Clergy staffing – Maggie had met with churchwardens of all the parishes to create a job description for a house-for-duty team vicar, which is now awaiting the Archdeacon's attention.

Start of 10.00 services at Linton – Maggie would like to encourage a period of prayerful peace at 9.55, while still allowing people to be welcomed at the door. The priest and deacon will take their seats by the altar and the small hand bell will be rung to attract people's attention.

9. Anderson Trust Application

It was noted that separate applications from different groups within the church had been put to The Anderson Trust in previous years. It would be more effective to co-ordinate the applications and it was agreed that the churchwardens and Rector would do this.

10. Beacon Trust youth work

Maggie Guite and Gill Powell described the current position of The Beacon Trust, following Barry Easton's departure in July. Trustees have been meeting with representatives from Romsey Mill, who would be willing to undertake the management of youth work in Linton. The Beacon Trust was trying to put a proposal together and co-ordinate funding to support it. The Trust has very little income of its own. The previous post was largely funded by Linton Parish Council, the URC, St Mary's and the Anderson Trust. Although a significant proportion of Barry's time was spent at LVC, no financial help was forthcoming from the College. The new headteacher at Linton Heights JS had indicated that he would welcome the chance to buy some time to cover the Y6 transition to LVC. It has been calculated that an hour of time per week would cost £1,000 per year including on-costs.

It was difficult for the PCC to agree to opt in without knowing the actual cost and how it would affect the budget. Molly Warrington proposed that we should continue to support youth work in principle, in partnership with other funding bodies, with a final opportunity to

decide at the next PCC meeting on 1st December. Maggie and Gill agreed to take these considerations to the Beacon Trust management group.

The treasurer confirmed that the PCC had entered into a three year funding agreement with the Beacon Trust which expired in January 2016.

11. Correspondence

11.1. People Fully Alive Strategy

Sue Mudge had circulated the Diocesan letter about the launch of the strategy in the cathedral on 27th September and reminded people that there are another series of open meetings this autumn. The Granta Deanery meeting is at Great Shelford on Wednesday 4th November, led by the Archdeacon.

11.2. Planning application for houses on the glebe field

Joan Smith had prepared a paper explaining the background by which the Diocese was able to offer glebe land for development. Sue Mudge also circulated a letter received from Jon Green, on behalf of the Ely Diocesan Board of Finance.

11.3. Governor vacancy

An email had been received from Pam Richardson tendering her resignation as a Foundation Governor at the infant school. Michael Younger proposed Nicola Collard to fill the vacancy, seconded by John Thorne and agreed by the meeting.

12. Any other business

Nanette Blackmore drew people's attention to the fact that she had found the pavilion heaters left on all day on Friday after the Mocha coffee session and all Sunday and overnight following coffee after the service. Nicola Collard offered to remind the people concerned on Fridays and Sue Ellis said that she would email those on the Sunday rota. The electric heating is very expensive and the pavilion is already running at a loss!

13. Date of next meeting

Tuesday 1st December 2015.

The meeting closed with The Grace.