

ST MARY THE VIRGIN, LINTON
MINUTES OF PCC MEETING HELD IN CHURCH
ON THURSDAY 12TH MAY 2022

PRESENT

Dr D Parry-Smith (Chair), Mr A Cornell-Webb, Miss C Ellis (Churchwarden), Mrs S Ellis (Treasurer), Mrs S King, Mrs S Mudge (Secretary), Dr S Nickolls, Mr J Organ, 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

Michael Wilcockson opened the meeting with prayer.

2. APOLOGIES AND WELCOME

Apologies were received from Mrs J Burge and Mrs H Evans. Mr A Gore expected to arrive during the meeting.

Andrew Cornell-Webb and Sarah Nickolls were welcomed as new members of the PCC.

3. MINUTES OF 14TH MARCH 2022

The minutes were approved as a true record.

4. MATTERS ARISING

Item 11 Churchyard Gates – deferred until item 8 below to allow Andrew Gore to be present.

5. ELECTION OF PCC POSITIONS AND COMMITTEES

5.1. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The three officers were willing to continue in their roles. Their nominations were unopposed and each was elected unanimously.

Lay Chair: David Parry-Smith proposed by David Watts and seconded Sarah King.

Treasurer: Sue Ellis proposed by David Parry-Smith and seconded Patricia Schofield.

Secretary: Sue Mudge proposed by Cathy Watts and seconded John Organ.

5.2. STANDING COMMITTEE

The Revised Church Representation Rules 2020, Section 9 Governance, rule M31 states that the Standing Committee should consist of the minister, churchwardens and at least two other members of the PCC. The Standing Committee exists to transact the PCC's business between meetings, in accordance with any directions from the PCC and refer back to the PCC if a resolution is required. The PCC had adopted the practice of including the three officers and one other member. Jacqui Burge was elected in November 2020 as the additional member and was willing to continue. Michael Wilcockson had previously requested to be included in place of the Rector during the vacancy. The committee therefore continues to be David Parry-Smith, David Watts, Charlotte Ellis, Sue Mudge, Sue Ellis, Jacqui Burge and Michael Wilcockson.

5.3. FABRIC COMMITTEE

Current members are Richard Tonry (Chair), Andrew Gore, John Organ, Judy Nightingale, Keith Nightingale, John Thorne, Jackie Hall, David Watts (as churchwarden) and omitting the Rector. No changes were made.

5.4. FINANCE & STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Current members are Suzanne Darkins (Chair), Sue Ellis, Sue Mudge, David Watts, Charlotte Ellis, Michael Wilcockson (in place of the Rector) and Sarah Nickolls. The role of Stewardship Officer is still vacant. No changes were made.

5.5. EVENTS COMMITTEE

The current committee is Charlotte Ellis (Chair), Nanette Blackmore, Jacqui Burge, Andrew Cornell-Webb, Sue Ellis, Sue Mudge, Anne Parry-Smith, Patricia Schofield, Cathy Watts and David Watts. The terms of reference state that at least two members must also be PCC members and this is fulfilled. No change.

5.6. CHILDREN & FAMILIES COMMITTEE

The team is currently Sarah Thorne, Nicola Collard, Moire Jarritt, Gill Powell, Cathy Watts and Michael Wilcockson. Ed Andrade had joined a year ago but then moved away from Linton.

5.7. DIGITAL GROUP

This is a relatively new group set up to investigate and co-ordinate changing ways of working within the church and to consider aspects such as GDPR and social media. Members are Michael Wilcockson, Charlotte Ellis, John Thorne, Sarah Thorne, Molly Warrington and Cathy Watts.

5.8. MINISTRY TEAM

The group is composed of clergy, lay ministers and others with outward facing ministry, as invited by the Incumbent, and advises the PCC on spiritual and worship issues. It was agreed last year that both Churchwardens would be part of the group during the Vacancy.

5.9. PASTORAL GROUP

Group members are invited to join the pastoral ministry by the Rector. Michael Wilcockson is covering this during the Vacancy. Judy Nightingale resigned as coordinator and Sue Filby has taken on the role which fits well with her ALM in Pastoral Ministry, awarded last Autumn. Reports are presented to the PCC termly.

5.10. CHAIRING PCC MEETINGS

David Parry-Smith continues to chair alternate PCC meetings and would welcome other people to volunteer to chair a meeting since the vacancy is extended. Michael Younger, Molly Warrington and Andrew Gore had responded previously. David asked people to contact Sue Mudge to offer to do this.

5.11. APPROVAL OF SIDESPEOPLE

David Watts had circulated a list of those people still willing to perform sidesperson duties. The role had been reduced during the pared-down Covid-restricted services and Nanette Blackmore had generally been available for duties. More interaction with congregation members is now possible and Sarah Thorne commented that she thought that welcoming people should be a priority while also checking whether people needed a service sheet or other material. The meeting approved the names on David's list. David had also listed those volunteering in other roles during services.

6. APPOINTMENTS

6.1. PCC REPRESENTATIVES TO THE ANDERSON TRUST

Michael Wilcockson and Sue Mudge were appointed in November 2020 and were willing to continue. They were proposed, seconded and agreed by the meeting.

6.2. PCC REPRESENTATIVES TO PARISH COUNCIL JOINT CHURCHYARD MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE

Richard Tonry and Andrew Gore were willing to continue and approved by the meeting.

7. SAFEGUARDING REPORT

Cathy Watts had circulated a document showing what is required to achieve level 2 of the Safeguarding Dashboard and highlighting aspects of the 8 sections which need PCC approval or other action.

1. Policies and action plans
The PCC approved the action plan and regular reviews are required.
2. Safeguarding procedures
The flowchart showing how to respond to a concern or allegation was approved. It has to be reviewed annually.
Social Media – Cathy pointed out that the safeguarding handbook stipulated that there should be a named church officer able to access any church social media accounts. The St Mary's Facebook page was set up by Nicola Collard and others have access to post items. Sarah Thorne operates the Messy Sarah page and posts items relating to Messy Church, Tots in Tow and Children & Families events. Charlotte Ellis offered to be the named person and she already has access to the St Mary's page. Sarah agreed to give Charlotte access to the Messy Sarah account which would then satisfy the requirements.
3. Safeguarding roles – complete, no action required.
4. Reviews and reports
Is the list of church activities complete? It should include all groups involving children, young people and vulnerable adults. David Parry-Smith said that the choir should be included and that he would do a risk assessment. **Action DP-S**
5. Training for key role holders
Some PCC members need to complete training and DBS checks need renewing every 3 years. Cathy had circulated a table so that people could see their own entry. **Action Everyone**
6. Church activities
PCC authorisation must be recorded in the minutes for each activity listed in item 4 to show that all tasks have been completed i.e. risk assessment, safer recruitment, DBS checks, training. Some are complete but others have parts still pending.
7. Displayed information – complete, no action required.
8. Safer recruitment and people management – leave for another time, action required.

8. CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT

David Watts and Charlotte Ellis spoke to the following points.

8.1. MINISTRY TEAM

- Notes from the Ministry team meeting on 27th April had been circulated.
- Lent and Easter services and activities had been successful – a good achievement, considering the vacancy continues. In retrospect, maybe the Children & Families team could be more involved in planning high profile services so that families may feel more welcome at major festivals.
- Christian Aid week 15th – 21st May. Major focus will be the regular coffee morning on 21st, organised by Pam Richardson and helpers. Funds for Christian Aid Ukraine refugee crisis. No door-to-door collections.
- Deanery Ascension Day Eucharist in Linton planned for May 26th plus refreshments afterwards.
- Pentecost – morning service of celebration on Sunday June 5th.
- Thy Kingdom Come – between Ascension and Pentecost. Resources ordered to create a prayer station in church.

- Queen's Platinum Jubilee June 5th – service in collaboration with the Free Church on recreation ground at 2pm with newly formed youth band. Followed by village picnic – Party in the Park. The service was not currently shown on the posters on social media. Michael Wilcockson said that he would query this with the Parish Office staff.
- Summer Make Lunch Club – Sarah Thorne is planning a drop in café with a wider range of activities on Wednesdays from end of July through August. Families will be asked to pre-book lunch; still free for low income families and others will be asked for a donation.
- New housing Horseheath Road / Bartlow Road – considering suitable leaflet to welcome newcomers to the village and to promote church activities.

Andrew Gore joined the meeting.

8.2. VACANCY

- It had been announced throughout the Team that no appointment had been made. The same advert was due to be in The Church Times again with an interview date of July 15th and meeting with the Bishop on 17th.
- Molly Warrington asked about the rationale behind the decision, given that the parish reps and Patrons were in favour of the earlier candidate. David Watts said that the Bishops had the final decision. It was also unfortunate to have a delay over Easter when people were asking about the outcome and no statement had been released. Michael Younger suggested that a letter could be sent to the Bishops to express our disappointment in the process. If there was a cause for concern within the application, the candidate should not have been asked for interview. David Parry-Smith thought that it had not been handled well, when considered in the context of normal workplace procedures. **Action CE/DW**

8.3. MEETINGS IN CHURCH

- Charlotte Ellis asked whether PCC members would prefer to continue to meet in church or whether we could revert to the pavilion. Molly Warrington said that she definitely preferred meeting in church to take advantage of the space. Others said that that it is more difficult to hear people as we are so spread out and of course, the lighting is poor. We can continue to meet in church but people must be prepared to speak more loudly.

8.4. MATTERS ARISING – CHURCHYARD GATE

- A letter of reply from the Parish Clerk had been circulated. The Council could see the validity of keeping the gate open for reasons of access but were still concerned about the safety aspects. They asked for confirmation that the PCC would accept liability in the event of an accident outside the gate in Church Lane.
- David Parry-Smith was not at the previous PCC meeting when this was discussed but said that he had recently nearly been involved in an accident with a child.
- Andrew Gore said that whether the gate is closed or open, liability is vested with the PCC as they own the land even though it is managed by the Parish Council. Andrew said that Church Lane is the same as any public highway. An incident could arise if someone were driving carelessly or if a parent or child were behaving carelessly. There are many public footpaths with no barriers leading on to a road.
- Sue Ellis said that the church insurance company would only pay compensation if there was proof of negligence and many churches do have open gates.
- Andrew suggested that a further letter should be sent to the Parish Clerk stating that we do not accept liability and saying that it would be possible to have a notice on a small post by the wall with 'No cycling' on one side and 'Beware of the road', or similar words on the reverse. **Action AG/SM**

- David Parry-Smith commented that he would not have voted for the gate to remain open, had he been at the last meeting. Sarah Thorne agreed with David's view and did not think that she had voted for the gate to remain open, contrary to the minutes stating that everyone had agreed that it should do so.

9. REPORTS TO PCC

9.1. FABRIC COMMITTEE

Richard Tonry had circulated a report.

- Formal approval is still awaited for the redecoration and faculty for the lighting project. The Friends of St Mary's have agreed that they are willing to underwrite the cost of £112,312.50 but urge the PCC to obtain as much grant funding as possible. David Parry-Smith suggested that grant applications be delegated to the F&S committee. Advice could be sought from the following people who have successfully applied for grants: Doug Irish (Linton Free Church), Stephen Bugg (St Mary's, Bartlow) and some friends of David Watts.
- Still awaiting Henry Freeland's proposal for the kitchenette in church.
- Waiting for a revised date for re-surfacing the churchyard paths, following postponement due to Covid within the contractor's workforce.
- A parishioner has requested stepping stones to be laid from the path to the memorial garden and is willing to fund the work. PCC was in agreement as long as the stones are not slippery in wet weather or become a trip hazard. Refer to the Joint Churchyard Maintenance committee. Maybe the work could be carried out alongside re-surfacing the paths.
- Cathy Watts has approached Magnet for a quotation for the pavilion kitchen.

9.2. CHILDREN AND FAMILIES TEAM

- Sarah Thorne informed the meeting that there would be a Churches Together activities tent at the Picnic in the Park on June 5th.
- Michael Younger asked if the PCC could approve a donation for the Infant School towards the cost of refurbishing the hall floor, which was due to cost about £2,000. This could come from Children and Families funds, given that no charge has been made for the 10 or so occasions when the school has been used for the Make Lunch Club. A donation of £750 was agreed.

9.3. DEANERY SYNOD REPORT

David Parry-Smith had circulated a report giving information on the following:

- Deanery Pastoral Plan – Bishop Dagmar had given a presentation at the open meeting in Linton on 12th March. A small group will be set up to progress this at parish level.
- The March Synod meeting at Harston Church had discussion on the financial position in the Deanery plus feedback is still sought from some parishes about the Living in Love and Faith course.
- Update on Mental Health First Aider training.
- Deanery Fair on 9th April raised approx. £1,500 for Youthinc. Search continues for a new youth worker and there is consideration whether to combine with other youth work provision to create a full time post.
- Ascension Day Eucharist is planned for Thursday 26th May in Linton, with an extended choir.

9.4. FINANCE & STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

The minutes from 26th April meeting had been circulated along with the budget summary of income and expenditure and the balance sheet to end of March.

- Charitable Giving – Sue Ellis noted that our current level of giving is less than 10%; David Watts calculated about 7%. Contribution to The Beacon Youth Trust is due to be reviewed at the July PCC meeting.
- David Parry-Smith asked for a graph forecast to see whether we would expect to use some reserves later in the year.
- Sue asked whether the PCC were in favour of investing another £20,000 in the CBF Church of England Investment Fund. It was previously agreed that the money from the closed Sterling Bond fund would be reinvested in £10,000 chunks. So far only one investment of £10,000 had been made in December. The meeting agreed with no votes against and no abstentions.
- Electricity prices – David Watts explained that a two-year contract was due to end. Advice had been sought from the Green Journey contact, linked to the Diocesan energy buying project. A three year contract with Pozitive Energy (100% renewables) was the best option; proposed by David Watts, seconded by Sue Ellis and passed. The gas contract currently has another year to run and can be deferred until July.

9.5. EVENTS COMMITTEE

- Charlotte Ellis's report summarised recent activities such as the Tapestry Singers concert in March, which raised £362.50; the Seder meal in April led by Alex Jacob raised £115.25 for church funds after making a donation to Christian Mission to the Jews of £120; March and April coffee mornings raised £190.50 and £227 respectively. Jan Munt's postponed talk about Ely Cathedral is now booked for 11th September.
- Pavilion kitchen – Cathy Watts said that Magnet could supply a suitable kitchen for about £3,500. She would be willing to project manage it and get a working group together to save money on fitting. This does not reduce the need for the kitchenette in church but is necessary to enable the pavilion to be hired out and to be used for church functions where hot food is planned.

9.6. BEACON YOUTH TRUST

The monthly report for March and the end of year summary had been circulated. Cynthia Mukoko was appointed in November and the BYT work was becoming more established and showing improved attendances at the various groups.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

10.1. VANDALISM IN PEACE GARDEN

One of the benches was destroyed on Good Friday and damage to the arbour was caused more recently. Installing a CCTV camera was suggested but that may be seen as intrusive by those wishing to use the garden legitimately. Molly Warrington suggested that a metal bench might be a useful replacement. Michael Younger said that Glynis had offered to speak to the donor who had given the bench in memory of her husband and was understandably upset. Michael Wilcockson offered to donate a spare metal bench.

10.2. TOILET TWINNING

David Parry-Smith wished this to be considered at the next meeting.

The meeting closed with prayer at 9.20pm.

Dates of future PCC meetings subject to a new Rector's approval:

Monday 11th July,

Thursday 8th September, Monday 14th November,

Thursday 12th January 2023, Monday 13th March 2023.

Deanery Synod: Wednesday 6th July at Bartlow, Monday 7th November at Ickleton.