

ST MARY THE VIRGIN, LINTON
MINUTES OF PCC MEETING HELD BY ZOOM
ON MONDAY 14TH SEPTEMBER 2020

PRESENT

Dr D Parry-Smith (Chair), The Revd. Canon Dr Maggie Guite, Mrs J Burge, Miss C Ellis, Mrs S Ellis (Treasurer), Mrs H Evans (Churchwarden), Mrs J George, Mr A Gore, Dr C Morse, Mrs S Mudge (Secretary), Mr J Organ, Mrs G Powell, Mr R Tonry and Revd. M Wilcockson.

Mrs C Watts (Safeguarding Officer) was present until the end of item 6.

1. OPENING PRAYER

After the prayer, David Parry-Smith asked all participants to say briefly what they wished to bring to the meeting and what would they hope to take away. (*This focused our minds on the broader picture and fostered a collaborative and empathetic approach to the ensuing discussions – SM*)

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mrs C Lockstone, Mrs J Nightingale and Mr D Watts.

3. MINUTES OF 9TH JULY 2020

The minutes of 9th July 2020 were approved.

4. MATTERS ARISING

All items covered elsewhere on the agenda.

5. IMPACT OF COVID-19

5.1. STEWARDS IN CHURCH

Sue Mudge queried whether the system of stewards should continue for two reasons: firstly it involves quite a lot of work for Jo George to produce the weekly rota as people fail to let her know advance availability and secondly there appear to be fewer people coming into the church than expected and thus reducing the need for control. Michael Wilcockson said that he valued conversations with visitors. Andrew Gore suggested keeping the stewards but also opening the church outside the 2 hour periods. Jo said that she was happy to continue to produce rotas. The status quo will prevail and any proposed future changes could be dealt with by the Standing Committee. If no steward is on duty, then there must be clear instructions for visitors regarding use of sanitiser, masks etc.

5.2. PAVILION LETTINGS

The lettings policy had been given to Anne Parry-Smith and Hilary Angetter, as agreed. Anne asked about the spare chairs which had been removed from church and stored in the pavilion (to allow socially distanced seating) and which currently rendered the pavilion unusable. Various options were discussed. Sue Mudge offered to speak to Anne to suggest that the lady interested in running yoga classes should be shown the space, as some additional income would be helpful. If she wanted to hire the pavilion, then alternative places for the chairs would be found, otherwise there was no urgency to move them.

6. SAFEGUARDING REPORT

Cathy Watts said that the online Safeguarding Dashboard can generate an action plan to check progress with policies and procedures within the parish. An outstanding area is that of social media. Nicola Collard should also be invited to the group looking at this – with

Cathy, Maggie, Sarah and/or John Thorne and Charlotte Ellis. Cathy has registered for a Diocesan course on 7th October.

(For more explanation on Safeguarding go to the Diocese of Ely website, select safeguarding then safeguarding templates and resources or click the link

<https://www.elydiocese.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-templates-resources/>

There is a helpful short video on the Safeguarding Dashboard which complements Cathy's reports to PCC – SM)

7. INFANT SCHOOL REPORT

7.1. REPORT FROM NICOLA COLLARD

A report from Nicola Collard, Chair of Governors, had been circulated. Kelly Harries, headteacher, and staff have implemented new ways of working to follow the government guidelines; such as staggered arrival and leaving times for children, staggered breaks and lunchtimes, carefully designed ways of moving round the school etc. Good communication has helped the term to start successfully. Three building projects were completed over the summer holiday: a Design & Technology area was installed in the hall, a therapy room has been erected in the Foundation Stage outdoor area and the staff room has been remodelled. All members of staff are healthy and well. There have been no core staff changes. Two new part-time teaching assistants and a midday supervisor have joined the team. The children cannot currently have their Friday church service but Nicola produces a video each week for the school to share. Governors' meetings and sub-committees are by Zoom. Please continue to hold the school community in your prayers.

7.2. GOVERNOR APPOINTMENT

Moire Jarritt's term of office as a PCC appointed governor ends in November. Moire is a valued member of the governing body and is willing to be appointed for a further four-year term. Moire was proposed by Sue Mudge, seconded by John Organ and appointed unanimously. **Action** - Sue to check what forms are required, inform Moire and the school.

8. RECTOR'S REPORT

Maggie reflected on the current position, the COVID difficulties and hopes for the future:

- Ambitious projects in areas of the MAP, frustration as many plans are put on hold; the church is experiencing restricted finances like many households.
- Sarah Thorne is due to be licensed for Children and Families ministry via Zoom on 3rd October. Funding that ministry may be more difficult than desired – set against lighting and organ improvements.
- Can the church embrace a bold vision, willing to take risks and trusting in God?
- Live streaming worship is challenging but Maggie is full of hope for successful outcomes.
- All Souls' service – not enough space in socially distanced seating to offer the usual service.
- Maggie is consulting with uniformed groups about the options for the Remembrance service.
- Christmas – may need tickets to attend, also considering options outside the church building, e.g. village carol singing.
- Maggie is heartened by the large number of people willing and wanting to attend services, she has also received positive feedback from online services.
- Maggie commended the Events committee for continuing to produce ideas for fundraising and online social contact.

9. MINISTRY TEAM REPORT

Minutes from Ministry Team meetings on 28th July and 21st August had been circulated and several points were included in the Rector's report above.

- Harvest 26th Sept. – Maggie suggested that people should donate vegetables and/or items for the Foodbank. The vegetables would be made into soup, frozen and available from 4th Oct. People would be invited to order a pot of soup for a donation of £5 or more, proceeds for Christian Aid.
- Better equipment is required to enhance live streaming, e.g. a new microphone plus stand, possibly will cost over £100. Maggie's phone appears to be the only one which does not cause feedback. Michael Wilcockson proposed some investment is needed in order to move forwards.
- David Parry-Smith proposed authorising expenditure up to £300 on equipment and also finding someone to run it, seconded Andrew Gore. All in favour. It was suggested that Simon Roper be asked for advice as he is familiar with the current sound system. **Action - Gill Powell** offered to speak to Molly Warrington about contacting Simon.
- Funding the possible £300 above – it was suggested that some of the Anderson Trust grant might be reallocated, as responding to changed needs due to COVID made buying pew Bibles and hymn books a lower priority. **Action - Sue Mudge** to write to Gill Powell, Chair of the Anderson Trust, to seek permission to reallocate funds.
- Internet connection in the church would help with streaming services. **Action - Richard Tonry** was asked to contact David Watts to find out the status of the proposed Broadband installation.

10. ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH METING (APCM)

10.1. APCM ARRANGEMENTS

The APCM, postponed from April, had been set for Sunday October 11th. Later dates were not suitable. It would be held in church and also via Zoom using 4G and the screen. It will follow a shortened service of the Word which could also celebrate the various church activities.

(N.B. Since the PCC meeting, clergy were advised that holding the APCM solely by Zoom was not legally valid. Meetings should be face to face and kept as brief as possible, just following the business which was required by law – including electing churchwardens, PCC members and approving the accounts for the previous year. Since individuals who could have helped with the Zoom part could not be present on the 11th Oct., it was decided that the St Mary's meeting would not be by Zoom but could be part of the Facebook Live presentation. SM)

10.2. ELECTORAL ROLL OFFICER

Pam Richardson had resigned from this position in March, after initiating the required updating of the Roll. Jo George had offered to take it on. Sue Mudge proposed that Jo be appointed, seconded by Chris Morse and agreed by the meeting. **Action - Jo George** to ask Pam to transfer the data to her and to display a list of the current names in church, prior to the APCM, and also to allow people to check their entry electronically.

11. FINANCE & STEWARDSHIP REPORT

Minutes from the committee meeting on 7th September had been circulated along with the balance sheet and budget summary for the eight months to the end of August 2020.

- Sue Ellis said that the figures were in line with her previous projection and some funds would need to be moved from the savings account to the current account by the end of September.

- The budget spreadsheet currently shows a positive variance of around £10,000 since, although income is lower, expenditure has also been lower than expected.
- Sue intends to ask budget holders for their requests for 2021 so that an appropriate budget may be prepared and presented in November.
- The role of stewardship officer is still vacant.
- Allocation of Anderson Trust grant - covered under item 9 above.

12. CHILDREN AND FAMILIES TEAM REPORT

Sarah Thorne joined the Zoom meeting for this item. A draft leaflet (paper copy) explaining the proposals for Children and Families Ministry had been delivered to PCC members in advance of the discussion. The leaflet introduces the TLG Make Lunch project and aims to encourage people to donate to the project in a number of ways. (TLG stands for Transforming Lives for Good and is a national organisation.)

- Sarah made the following points:
 - PCC looked at the guiding document at the last meeting;
 - Leaflet aims to inform, enthuse and encourage church members to pledge support;
 - Sarah and Maggie have received offer of financial help from Linton Community Help (the fund set up at the start of COVID-19 lockdown to help Linton families in difficult circumstances) to run a pilot lunch scheme in October half term;
 - Sarah has started fundraising by selling some toys and plans to set up a Just Giving page to attract sponsorship for her to give up lunch throughout October;
 - Sarah has spoken to schools and an initial estimate gives possibly 16 families from the Infant school and 10 from the Junior School;
 - Gill Fraser Lee has seen the leaflet and has offered some suggestions on presentation.
- Maggie added:
 - We are saying as a church that we are excited by the vision;
 - It will be a beneficial step forward to have a Children and Families Minister;
 - We have supported Sarah's training and her licencing is approaching;
 - The Make Lunch project is an integrated way of reaching out plus mission to the community;
 - The Finance & Stewardship committee suggested offering a stipend initially and working towards a salaried position - we don't want the leaflet appeal to look like an all or nothing situation - but to encourage donations to show commitment from church members to help attract other funding.
- David Parry-Smith asked Sarah what she wanted the PCC to do. She replied give the project approval. David said that there were two parts to it - the lunch project and helping families and then also Sarah's work as a children's minister. The finance committee recommended a graduated approach - saying this is where we are aiming for with a Children's worker, but it may take a year or two to get there - but we are totally supportive of the work.
- Maggie had been asked by the Diocese about the form of words for Sarah's licencing - and chose Linton Team Ministry - deliberately widening the scope which may help with other funding applications.
- Andrew Gore said that the Pioneer Minister from the Granta Vale team (Abington, Balsham etc.) had been working with families and had been accepted for ordination. It would be worth asking how that position had been funded in case we could approach the same external agencies. **Action - Sue M** to investigate.
- The Parish Council may also be willing to contribute to the lunch project.
- Must also encourage people to Gift Aid their donations.

- Cathy Watts was thanked for producing the leaflet. Michael Wilcockson said that he had identified some proof-reading changes and was asked to send them to Sue Mudge.

Sarah Thorne left the meeting.

The Chair proposed that we move on with the process: that initially a stipend or honorarium of £3,000 + expenses should be paid to Sarah, supplemented in future years with grant funding. This amount had been discussed in the Finance Committee and was felt to be achievable. When enough funds are secured to reach a part-time salary, then the position should be advertised. This was seconded and agreed unanimously.

The Chair also proposed that the PCC delegates the process of applying for grants to the Finance and Stewardship committee and that spending funds is referred back to the PCC - seconded and agreed unanimously.

13. **EVENTS REPORT**

The minutes from 10th September had been circulated. David Parry-Smith was thanked for setting questions and organising the virtual quiz which raised £70 in donations. The quiz was enjoyed by those gaining high scores, although some participants found it rather hard. The virtual garden show had proved popular and raised £288.50 net. Winners of each category appreciated receiving a certificate and small plant. After further restrictions about numbers of people allowed to meet together, the committee had reluctantly shelved the Christmas Tree festival idea. Another virtual event will be offered.

14. **DEANERY SYNOD REPORT**

A report had been circulated.

- The postponed Deanery fair has now been cancelled from October and it is hoped to hold a spring next year, as normal.
- Sam (Samuel) Graham has been appointed as the part-time Youthinc worker. A request for continued funding has been sent to clergy and PCC treasurers.
- Clergy appointments in the Diocese have been frozen until at least January, affecting Duxford/Hinxton/Ickleton (due to interview) and Sawston/Babraham has just become vacant.
- The Diocese has decided that there will be no increase in Parish Share next year.

15. **FABRIC REPORT**

The committee had not met. A report updating various points had been circulated from Richard Tonry and Andrew Gore. Members of the committee (AG, RT and DW) had met with Chris Morse, Margaret Cox and Hugh Paton from The Friends of St Mary's to discuss the suggestions relating to setting priorities and formalising the requests for funding. Andrew has drafted a protocol based upon Chris's note, which will be considered by The Friends and, if agreement is reached, be brought to the November PCC meeting.

16. **PROGRESS OF IMPROVEMENTS TO CHURCH INTERIOR**

Most initiatives ceased during lockdown and have not progressed since.

David Parry-Smith said that the **organ reports** indicated expenditure of around £250,000 for a rebuild and turning the organ through 90 degrees. David hopes that we could take a phased approach as that sum is currently unattainable. One of the companies had since gone into liquidation.

17. AOB

Youthinc request above – Maggie Guite said that Suzanne Darkins was attending a Zoom meeting on the same evening as the PCC, to learn more about the project and the request would be referred to the F&S committee.

The meeting closed in prayer at 21.30

Date of future meetings: Monday 9th November,
Thursday 14th January 2021, Thursday 11th March.