



Minutes of PCC Meeting Tuesday 21st November 2023 at 8pm

Present: Howard Wright, David Duffin, Andrew Walters, Rich Gillard, Pauline Hughes, Claire MacPherson (Treasurer), Frank Maloney, Pam Maloney, Bob Meekums, Doug Titheridge, Jill Williams, Jane Hughes (guest), David Williams (secretary).

1. Welcome and Apologies

Action

Howard Wright welcomed everyone to the sixth meeting of 2023. Apologies were received from Janet Foster.

2. Worship & Prayer

Howard led a period of worship with the singing of "This is the Day that the Lord has made" and "A Thousand Hallelujahs", and in prayer.

3. Declarations of (financial) Interest

Andy Walters has been professionally assisting the roofing contractor in the repair of leaks from the main church roof and will also be involved in similar work around the tower.

4. PCC – 19th September 2023

- a. Approval of Minutes – approved *nem con*.
- b. Matters Arising from Previous Meetings - None

5. Personnel and Youth and Children's Worker Recruitment

- a. Additional Personnel Team Member
Bob Meekums has accepted an invitation to join the Personnel Team. The appointment was approved by PCC *nem con*.
- b. Review of Matt's workload – volunteer?
A job description is in preparation for a part-time (1-2 mornings per week) voluntary person to assist Matt in the office. In view of the support that COGS is already giving to St Andrew's Medstead, the nature of the job will also be shared with them in the hope that some mutual help might be forthcoming.
To make the workload more manageable, it was suggested that we should explore the use of *Church Suite*, a set of administration support software. The software is designed among other tasks to help plan events and manage the church diary, to support volunteers, teams and rotas, and manage rooms and resources. The cost would be £726 pa. With Frank proposing and Rich seconding, PCC **agreed** to investigate trying the software for a review period of one year.
- c. Response to Y&CM advertisements 1st round and re-advertising (closing date 24th Nov). No suitable candidate had been found in response to the original advertisement. A second advertisement had been placed with a new proposed salary range of £25-£30 depending on experience. Five possible candidates had replied – one from UK, one from Singapore, one from Brazil and two from Nigeria. Personnel Team would review applications on Tuesday 28th Nov. PCC noted that COGS had in the past successfully employed youth workers from overseas before but recognised the greater difficulty of so doing in the current legal and political climate. Issues around immigration and sponsorship, accommodation and safeguarding were discussed, as well as the impracticability of observing overseas candidates at work. It was stressed that the most significant characteristic to be looked for is a heart for youth evangelism.

- d. Longer term considerations
 - i. Volunteer team need

At present Kids Church has a growing team of helpers for whom we are very grateful. But it needs more who are able and willing to lead – teaching a single group of children aged between 3 and 11 is hard work. David Duffin runs a Monday after-school activity for three or four, with the help of one or other of two ladies.
 - ii. Financing

Lorna formally finishes her contract on 14th December. We are receiving the appropriate sums from HMRC in support of her maternity leave. Adding in necessary overheads for a successor will cost about £32,000 pa. When the need in our community to share the Good News is so great, can we afford to/not-to appoint a Youth and Children’s minister? (see also Item 6a)
- e. PRAYER

Andy, David D and Doug led us in prayer for the right decision about appointing.

6. Finance.

- a. Financial Statement, January 1st to October 31st 2023

Claire presented two documents:
PCC Report - Oct 23.xlsx
PCC Report Commentary Oct 23.pdf

A number of the congregation have increased their contributions in response to the public sharing of the state of church finance early this year. There was reduced expenditure in employee costs and some activities. So, she was able to forecast a modest surplus of about £10k for the year in place of the budgeted deficit of £32.5k. However, we recognise that appointing a new Youth and Children’s minister would add substantially to the budget for 2024.

Since March 2022 our electricity supplier had provide no bills based on the readings of a new “Smart” meter. She has been setting aside an accrual each month to cover these anticipated bills. The supplier is now presenting large, estimated bills which bear no comparison to our actual usage. Claire, with the involvement of the Diocese, is expecting to be able to resolve the matter, though because of price fluctuation over the period we will probably need to find an additional £2-3k.
- b. Budget Planning for 2024

With so many uncertainties over Parish Reorganisation and staffing, Claire will draft a budget based on what we know, expecting that there will be necessary adjustments before long.

PCC thanked Claire for her care in managing the various financial issues.

CM

7. Update on Discussions with St Andrew’s, Medstead

- a. Formal consultation

Having told us previously that the local Parish Reorganisation would not go to the meeting of Church Commissioners until February 2024, we were pleased to learn that they will consider our situation at the Meeting of December 13th. Howard has replied to fifteen questions, which the Diocese will use in its response to the five objecting representations.

Because of the necessary procedures and protocols (and Christmas and New Year) we are unlikely to receive a decision until late January/early February.

8. Teams

- a. Building:
 - i. Quinquennial Review

Still awaiting the report. An emergency repair to the roof around the tower is holding, but Ian’s company will make further detailed investigations.

AW/DD

ii. Progress on Solar Panels

From a paper tabled at the meeting, it now appears that the full cost of installing solar panels will not be provided by the donor as previously expected. Frank undertook to enquire of community funding that might be available from EHDC.

FM

b. Ministry Leaders.

Decisions over future leadership of four ministries will be held over until after pastoral reorganisation.

9. Safeguarding

No issues to report. Howard reminded PCC that the task of Safeguarding Officer is one that must be taken off Matt's workload.

10. Health and Safety.

Bi-monthly report: Frank had provided document:
23.11.21Health & Safety Rpt.docx

11. Any Other Business.

Howard reminded the meeting of the event on the previous Sunday evening at which Pastor Joshua of International Needs had spoken powerfully about the work among street boys in Nairobi, Kenya. We continue to support the Diocese of Karamoja. He asked that the matter of COGS Tithe be an agenda item for the next meeting.

DW

12. Date of next meeting:

PCC, Tuesday 16th January 2024 (assuming we follow our current pattern of dates)

Howard W concluded the meeting with prayer at 10.02pm.
