



Minutes of PCC Meeting
Tuesday 19th March 2024 at 7.30pm
in COGS Church Hall

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

1. Welcome and Apologies	<u>Action</u>
<p>Howard Wright welcomed everyone to the 2nd meeting of 2024. He remarked that this was to be the last PCC meeting of the historic Parish of Four Marks before the joining of COGS with St Andrews', Medstead.</p> <p>Apologies for absence had been received from Doug Titheridge.</p> <p>Howard reported that Janet Foster had tendered her resignation from PCC. Howard noted that she had been the longest serving member of PCC in recent times. PCC recorded its thanks to Janet for her long and faithful service to COGS in general and PCC in particular.</p>	
<p>2. Worship & Prayer</p> <p>Howard led the meeting in sung worship – “Crown Him with many crowns”, “Goodness of God”. Several members led the meeting in prayer.</p>	
<p>3. Declarations of (financial) Interest</p> <p>None.</p>	
<p>4. PCC – 23rd January 2024</p> <p>a. Approval of Minutes – approved <i>nem con</i>, and Howard signed them off.</p> <p>b. Matters Arising from Previous Meetings: None</p>	
<p>5. Finance.</p> <p>a. Annual Report and Accounts – approval Howard had prepared a draft Annual Report, less the Annual Accounts. It was agreed that as soon as the Accounts are drafted, an independent member of COGS will check everything, to avoid issues that even the Independent Examiner had not detected last year. A complete document should be circulated to PCC as soon as practicable, and the new PCC constituted in April will be entitled to sign off the full COGS Annual Report.</p> <p>b. Claire presented a summary financial report for the first two months of 2024, <i>PCC report Feb 24 .xlsx</i> and took questions over matters of clarification. She reported that problems over payment for electricity had been resolved and PCC recorded its thanks to Jolyon Lucas for his help in reconciling energy accounts going back three years. Also thanks to Claire for providing the report, having returned from holiday less than 24hrs previously.</p> <p>c. Supporting Communities Fund - March 2024 Monitoring: to hand back to EHDC? A significant portion of the grant for Holiday at Home (H@H) awarded to COGS by East Hampshire District Council remains unspent. COVID lockdowns and the reluctance of elderly guests to venture out in following years meant that H@H could not be delivered as before. Claire proposed with Frank seconding that the residual amount should be returned to EHDC before the end of March 2024 so that it should not carry over into the new Benefice accounting. PCC agreed unanimously.</p>	FM/CM

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> d. Budget for 2024 (minor adjustments) The forecast for the remainder of 2024 has improved following significant lump-sum donations. e. Plan with merging of parishes: changes to bank details It is planned that we keep the existing bank accounts until the Charity status of the new Benefice has been settled. We will report 3-month accounts for January-March 2024 and 9-month accounts for April-December 2024. Our Financial Year will be unchanged. Frank is keeping our Insurers informed. COGS and St Andrews use the same insurer. The intention is to start a single new policy from 1st April, with premiums simply the sum of the current two. f. St Andrews does not currently have Charity status. Frank has established that we can keep our COGS Charity number for the new Benefice. It will not be necessary to move assets of COGS to a new charity. Therefore, this PCC resolved to change the name of the Charity from the '<i>The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Four Marks;</i>' to '<i>The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Benefice of Medstead and Four Marks, or to another suitable name determined by the Charities Commission</i>'. Pauline Hughes formally proposed the resolution; Jill Williams seconded. 	
<p>6. SPCM and Four Marks Closing Meeting – 16th April</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Formal consultation completed by the Church Commissioners and a date for joining of the parishes had been set for April 1st 2024. b. At 7pm on Tuesday 16th April 2024 we will hold separate parallel meetings of the old parishes for thanksgiving for all that has gone before, and to receive the individual Annual Accounts for 2023. At about 7.30pm we shall celebrate the joining of the two parishes (Coffee and cake!), followed by the first meeting of the new Benefice which will be a Special Parochial Church Meeting (SPCM). c. At the SPCM, we will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Elect two Church Wardens. Both will have responsibility for the whole (new) Benefice but ideally each will take a lead for one building. ii. Elect an Assistant Warden for each building. These are not legally required but will assist the Wardens in dealing with matters local to one congregation. iii. Present the new Electoral Roll for the combined parish. iv. Elect four representatives (ideally two from each former parish) to the Alton Deanery Synod (and so to the new PCC) v. Elect 9 PCC members, ideally an approximately even share of representation from each congregation. vi. Appointment of an Independent Examiner for Accounts 2024. d. Following Key dates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Tuesday 23rd April, 7.30pm – Inaugural meeting of the new PCC ii. Saturday 18th May, 10am-3pm – PCC Awayday iii. Tuesday 28th May, 7.30pm – PCC 	
<p>7. Youth and Children’s Worker</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Offer been made and accepted – progress report. Virginia (her one given name), an Indian national, has accepted the post. We are applying to be her sponsor. She has a current UK visa, but our aim is to transition her to a '<i>Minister of Religion</i>' UK visa. On the matter of safeguarding, she has a UK DBS, but having only been in UK for a short while the Diocese also requires an equivalent Indian Police Certificate. We are well aware of the high cost of living in the Four Marks area. She will need housing and a car. She will need to pay a premium in order to qualify for NHS services. The church will be encouraged to pray about all these needs. 	

<p>She is sending a short biography and photograph so that we can inform the Church about her.</p>	
<p>8. Deanery Synod Meeting of 19th February 2024</p> <p>a. Clergy wellbeing (minute 3); see also COGS PCC 23rd January 2024, item 5b. In 2020, Howard’s much desired sabbatical was cut short by the pandemic and he has had no opportunity to take it up again. It was noted with concern that the new Benefice of Medstead and Four Marks will have the least clergy resources of any in the Deanery. We now lack sufficient cover for Pastoral Care, for Communion and Admin support. We would ask that the Deanery support any representation we may make to improve this imbalance of resource.</p> <p>(Historical note: When Simon McMurtary completed his curacy in 2015, COGS was informally told that we might expect a replacement in 2017. That did not happen. Jon Rooke has not been replaced after he moved on from his part-time position at COGS)</p>	
<p>9. Teams</p> <p>a. Personnel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Admin Volunteer – Angela Botham has accepted an invitation to provide four hours per week of administrative support to Matt and some cover for holidays. ii. A new <i>.cogs</i> email address will be created to be used jointly by Howard and Matt to improve dealing with external communication. iii. Update on trial of <i>Church suite</i>. Jane said that although a number of features are still to be rolled out, she had trialled some booking and registration facilities for the recent Messy Church and found it very useful. <p>b. Building:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Quinquennial review - see comments in the draft Annual Report. ii. Progress on solar panels – still exploring sources of external contribution to funding. <p>c. Ministry Leaders: nothing to add at present.</p>	
<p>10. Safeguarding</p> <p>Nothing to report.</p>	
<p>11. Health and Safety.</p> <p>a. Bi-monthly report: Frank had provided document: <i>24.03.19 Health & Safety Report.docx</i>. He also reported on a minor incident involving a toddler at the Monday morning group. No further action was required in any case.</p>	
<p>12. Any Other Business.</p> <p>a. None notified.</p>	
<p>13. Date of next meeting:</p> <p>SPCM: Tuesday 16th April 2024 (see item 6b) PCC: Tuesday 23rd April 2024. 7.30pm PCC Away Day 18th May 2024. 10am-3pm Other dates TBC</p>	
<p>Howard W concluded the meeting with prayer at 9.15pm(!).</p>	