

# Minutes of PCC Meeting March 27<sup>th</sup> 2024 in All Saints

Present: Andrew Belfield (Lay Chair), Janet Bird, Verity Tranter (Churchwardens), Colin Bird (Treasurer), Martin Penny (Parish Administrator), Linda Dye, Helen Briggs, Mary Penny (Hon Sec). Also, present (for item 1) Lyn Paddon.

Apologies were received from Nerine Chalmers and Shirley Glover.

## **1 AoB.**

Requests for AoB came from Mary and from Martin. As Lyn was present, we took the AoB items first.

### **Appointment of Lyn Paddon as Parish Safeguarding Officer and Safer Recruiting Lead (Letter of 9<sup>th</sup> March 2024).**

Mary reported that all members of the PCC had approved this by the requested date and so Lyn was duly appointed as of 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024 under rule M29(2). The PCC welcomed Lyn and thanked her for taking on this important role.

### **Safeguarding update from Lyn (including Item 10 on the agenda).**

Lyn reported that she had fully reviewed the current status of the safeguarding hub for All Saints, and we were currently somewhere in level 2. She has identified what needs to be done before the APCM to ensure we are 100% compliant.

This means:

- a) Confirmation of PCC approval of current policy – this to be circulated and approved by correspondence.
- b) That this becomes an annual task in our cycle of work
- c) That we ensure we have all the relevant paperwork available in church
- d) The Safer Church posters are updated and displayed in both Church and Hall.

Lyn reported that there was nothing to report under item 10 and then left the meeting.

### **Policies update**

Following on from Lyn's research, Martin reported that there seemed to be some gaps in the archives. He requested that all members send him copies of relevant policies so he can re-establish a complete set both electronically and in church.

### **Hertfordshire Festival of Music Community Event**

HFoM run an annual Community Event on the Late Spring Bank Holiday (27<sup>th</sup> May this year). Unfortunately, the usual venue (grounds of the Castle) is not available.

Martin asked if the PCC were happy with the Hall Grounds being used as a picnic area with the concert taking place in church (to avoid the noise from Gascoyne Way). This would mean the grass would need to be cut sometime in the previous week. This was agreed.

## **2 Minutes of Meeting 17<sup>th</sup> January 2024**

The minutes of the January meeting were approved and signed, leaving the confidential portion to be read out and signed under item 5.

## **3 Matters arising**

Martin reported that the repairs to the Fanfare Trumpet were now completed, and the pipes had been reinstalled this morning (27<sup>th</sup> March). The final bill was some £500 less than quoted as less work had been needed.

## **4 Finance**

On our operations, the first quarter was better than budget, primarily due to the performance of Soundbites (£4,481 against a budget of £3,000) and the receipt of a 2023 church hire fee of £400 which pushed church hire for the quarter to £1,680 against budget of £1,250. The Hall made £3,248 in the quarter, which is in line with last year's excellent performance, and we are receiving slightly better interest on the Memorial Fund than budgeted.

Overall we still had a deficit of £4,729 against a budgeted deficit of £7,369.

Our General Fund stands at £8,491, which is low, given cash flow needs (which include the costs incurred on the Vicarage). It is inevitable that we will have to put some cash into the General Fund from the Memorial Fund (possibly by way of loan) to ensure we have adequate working capital, whether or not we need to finance the deficit later in the year. As a reminder, our opening general fund was £16,470, so any cumulative deficit beyond this will have to be financed by a capital contribution from the Memorial Fund

The Fabric Fund is down to £3,200 having spent over £7,000 in the quarter. Most of this was spent on repairs and maintenance of the heating system.

The other balances need no comment, other than the Vacancy account. This records what we have spent on the vicarage since the start of the interregnum and amounts to just over £2,000 so far ( £1,300 to remove vegetation and the balance in utility bills) and I have asked the Diocese to reimburse the PCC.

Attention was drawn to the statement on page 4 of the papers circulated which noted that the annual deficit is being supported by the Memorial Fund, with the approval of the trustees.

PCC thanked Colin for his work and approved the accounts.

Colin reminded the PCC that the Mothers Union branch, which recently closed, donated its remaining funds to buy a new altar frontal for All Saints. The PCC thanked the MU for this generous gift.

Minutes from the hall Sub Committee had been circulated and Colin observed that the Hall had had a very successful year.

## **5 Sustainability**

Mary read the Part 2 minutes from January, plus Colin's letter to our potential partner. These were approved and signed.

Colin gave a verbal update on recent developments along with some recommendations as to how we proceed in moving this forward in our new circumstances. These were approved by the PCC.

## **6 Vacancy**

The Parish Profile and Advertisement had been circulated in advance and Janet updated the meeting on how the Diocese wish to proceed. They have understood the long-standing lack of enthusiasm for a Team Structure in Hertford and, based on requests from other churches in the Team, wish to dissolve it. To do so they need confirmation from us that this is our wish too. The PCC formally unanimously confirmed this is our desire.

Based on this, the vacancy will be advertised as Priest-in-Charge (Incumbent Designate) so that we can proceed with the recruitment process in parallel with the work to legally dissolve the Team. This makes no difference to stipend etc. The PCC approved this approach.

Janet confirmed that there are no plans to rent the Vicarage at present and it was noted that the Vicarage phone was disconnected in mid-October and so we have probably lost the use of that number.

The PCC wondered how best to publicly acknowledge the very generous level of outside support we have received, allowing us to continue our many and varied services. It was suggested we should formally do so at the APCM.

Thanks were expressed to Janet, Verity, Shirley, Martin (P) and Martin (B) for all the work in creating and editing the Profile and Advertisement.

## **7 Fabric**

**Boiler replacement.** Quotes from Cook (new boilers) & Herschel (Infra-red) had been circulated in advance. New gas boilers would also necessitate additional expenditure to remove all the asbestos from the boiler room (making the total cost around £50k) in comparison with £160k+ for Infra-red (which doesn't address some areas of the

church). Following an extensive discussion (Merits of Power Flush, poor circulation in the Chancel area, likelihood of a sufficiently powerful electricity supply, the intrusive nature of the infra-red heaters, the low likelihood of an effective heat-pump solution,) the PCC concluded that the only currently viable option is two new gas boilers. Further research is being undertaken with a view to reaching a decision in June.

During maintenance on the current boiler, a scaffolding tower was used to adjust the ball cocks of the header tanks in the Organ Transept.

**CCTV** We have responded to a number of queries from the DAC and are hopeful that they are now in a position to approve this (as required by our Insurer).

Thanks were offered to Colin for his work on these items.

## **8 Events/Social**

28<sup>th</sup> April: We plan a 'Bring & Share' lunch after the APCM.

18<sup>th</sup> May: Plant Sale, Green Talk & refreshments. If we can muster enough volunteers, we will also offer Lunches in support of Christian Aid.

19<sup>th</sup> May: Civic Service

21<sup>st</sup> Sept: Environment Day

## **9 Health & Safety**

Nothing to report.

## **10 Safeguarding**

As noted under item 1, nothing to report.

## **11 Meeting dates etc**

APCM 28/4/24, New PCC 15/5/24

Nomination forms were available for use, and all were encouraged to try and 'sign up' new members.

Martin reminded everyone that the Electoral Roll revision is active, closing on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> (15 days before the APCM). He and Janet are reviewing the list, both for those who have passed away and those who have moved away.