

**MINUTES OF A MEETING
OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL
OF ST PETER AND ST PAUL, RUSTINGTON
Held on Tuesday 23rd January 2024 at 7.00 pm**

Present: There were 17 members present.

1. **Opening Devotions** – The meeting began with a reading from John’s gospel, and a worship song.

2. **Welcome and Apologies** – The Chair welcomed everyone. There were apologies from three members.

3. **Minutes from the 14th November 2023**

It was proposed and seconded that the Minutes from the 14th November meeting were accepted as an accurate record.

4. **Matters Arising from above Minutes**

Item 14 - The aumbrey – as part of the re-ordering of the chancel furniture, as opposed to the church, this will be looked at as well as the acolyte candle holders and processional cross. It has not yet been done.

Item 7 – slides will be put up.

Item 8 – currently a member of the congregation is reading the meters; he is looking to hand this on to someone else. We need someone to submit them as well as see if we can have smart meters installed. The Vicar and the churchwardens will look into this. They will also look at the water bills for the church.

There was surprise from one member that only one person had gone to see the lighting set up. It was pointed out that there was in fact another member of the congregation did go as well and the architects had seen and approved work done by CLS.

5. **Confidentiality of Minutes**

There were no matters of confidentiality.

6. **Health and Safety**

The report was forwarded before the meeting.

7. **Safeguarding**

The report was forwarded before the meeting. A slight update to the report – 59 have completed the training at the appropriate level, four are in progress and two are outstanding (and have been for a considerable time). Thanks to those involved for their response to a safeguarding incident. Encouraging to know that survivors of abuse have complimented us for the way our safeguarding is set out on our web page.

The amended safeguarding policy needs to be signed by the Vicar and the churchwardens.

8. **Feedback from our sub groups**

a) **Finance**

The proposed IE is not a regular worshipper; she is happy to stand as our Independent Examiner. It was proposed and seconded that we appoint Catherine Dixon as our Independent Examiner. All were in favour.

A new card reader has been purchased and set up with SumUp and Give a Little; it is more mobile so can be used between hall and church. It will be registered to our church parish address and the gift aid will be automatically reclaimed.

Gift Aid – this will be passed on.

A report has been circulated in advance. The possible ‘real-time’ accounting as at end December 2023. There was a large difference between November and December deficit; this is because incomes and outgoings are not always regular and notably, two lots of parish share were paid in December.

From the spreadsheet in Excel 2023 November - proposed budget – the £8000 is our tithed giving.

Online donations – these are made via the website and the tablet at the back of church.

Performance against budget – it looks as though our expected shortfall was accurate.

b) Eco group

Toilet Twinning – we wouldn’t need to re-sponsor if any work is done in the church hall. Is there an opportunity to sponsor the ‘Changing Places’ work being done in our carpark? We’d have to ask the parish council for their permission – the Eco group will take this on.

Slight change in the report – “aim to reach more progress” should be “we aim to make more progress”.

Rocks are feeding back an Eco tip with the congregation each week.

The Eco group will ‘drip feed’ some of the questions/ideas from the A Rocha project. Some of the ideas need a lot of work and have to be thought about sensitively and thoughtfully as they are quite challenging.

Clerk secretary should be clerk.

In bloom are not really able to be assembled but the parish council give their full support.

We will be looking at getting quotes to clear the area in the churchyard.

c) Buildings

Final adjustments that can be made on the glass doors at the back of church have been done.

d) Social and Fundraising

Balloons – is there an eco-friendly alternative that can be used at the Mardi Gras event? Sarah will look into this. Some are foil so will be ok to use.

Plans for the Mardi Gras look great and it's very clever to move from the jollity of Mardi Gras, to the solemnity of Lent.

9. **Charitable Giving**

The congregation had submitted several charities for consideration:

- Alzheimer's Society
- Orchard
- 4sight
- Tearfund
- Turning Tides
- WaterAid

It had been agreed that if we had not got enough (£420) for the Toilet Twinning, some of the money from the third charity pot would make up that difference.

- Do we give to all six?
- Should we focus on Christian Groups
- Should we focus on local charities
- We already support FSW – local
- We already support Kev and Jen – international

It was proposed and seconded that we give to Orchard, Foresight, Turning Tides and Tearfund. All were in favour.

Offertory for Toilet Twinning will be on the 3rd March at both services.

It would be useful, in future, to decide our charitable giving before the year end, so money is not held over and the charities can get the money sooner!

10. **Prayers of Love and Faith**

The prayers had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

- These new Prayers of Love and Faith can be used at the vicar's discretion.
- In groups, we discussed thoughts:
 - o Important step in the right direction
 - o Shows diversity of what it is to be a couple and/or a family
 - o These prayers are very personal; make us more accepting to all people
 - o Slight misunderstanding of the wording at the beginning/introduction to the prayers and who it is being prayed for.
 - o These prayers can be used for covenanted friendships (celibate couples)
 - o Other prayers included are for same sex couples
 - o The whole of the Church of England has been undergoing courses/training on this topic.
 - o A couple of members of the congregation have had some concern/questions about where this will lead.
 - o Has the theology been hidden in the beauty of the words of the prayers?
 - o One member of the congregation (elderly lady) emailed Natalie to say how delighted she was at these prayers.
 - o Another couple said they might leave the church if we were to start using these prayers.
 - o We need to be brave, use the courage of our convictions; if we're going to be an inclusive church, we need to be inclusive.

- In Baptism, Confirmation, Marriage, we as a congregation, proclaim our support. Do these prayers include any congregational support? At the moment, there isn't anything like that included.
- These prayers are now only allowed to be used within a main service.
- Stand alone services are not currently allowed; it is hoped and thought this will happen in the not-too-distant future. This would have to be agreed between the incumbent and the PCC. The PCC would need to make a resolution and then register their decision with the Diocese. It would be good for this decision to be made before it becomes legal, so we are ready one way or another and prevent it becoming a pastoral issue.
- This topic will be being discussed amongst many other PCC's.
- It is not a new topic – there has been ongoing discussions for a number of years about the right way forward.
- We should be ready and inclusive before we need to be asked.
- It would be good to have an end date to put the resolution to the PCC.
- The Bishop of Oxford has written a good article 'Together in Love and Faith' about this and it would be beneficial for everyone to read.
- Get the word out to the congregation – again and again and again!
- Could we have an extraordinary PCC meeting to discuss just this issue.
- Need to remember that although we're talking about rules and resolutions, in fact we are talking about people, with feelings.

Following the discussion, it was proposed and seconded that the PCC support the Vicar and Curate in their use of these prayers in main services; 15 in favour, 1 objection, 1 abstention.

It was also proposed and seconded that we inform the wider congregation about stand alone services and after conversation, discussion and reading, an extraordinary meeting of the PCC will be held where a resolution can be made to approve the use of these prayers in standalone services. 16 in favour; 1 abstention. A date for an extraordinary meeting will be agreed via email.

11. **Staff Wages**

The Administrator is currently on £11.50 per hour. Subject to her six-month review, it was suggested we increase her rate.

Going forward it would be useful to have a pay band.

It would be better to offer any changes in terms of percentage.

It was proposed and seconded that we increase the Administrator's wage to £12.50 per hour, from April. All were in favour.

The post of Childrens and Families Worker contract is up in September and we'll need to review her job and salary too.

12. **Matters raised by the Vicar**

No matters were raised.

13. **Matters raised by the Churchwardens**

Arun District Council would be happy for us to do some re-wilding but would need to come and see the area we are proposing. We will send them a plan of the suggested area and decisions will come back to the PCC. The proposed area is to the right of the church (with

back to the lych gate) and away from the newer graves. We need to be sensitive in our communicating with the community as any issues with graves can be very sensitive.

14. Any Other Business

The item sent in will be delayed as a risk assessment will be needed.

The meeting closed with prayers and the Grace at 21.08

Dates of future meetings:

2024

5th March	Standing Committee
19th March	at which we will accept the accounts for the APCM
14th May	APCM
28th May	Standing Committee
11th June	PCC
25th June	Standing Committee
9th July	PCC

Signed.....

Dated.....