

The Parish of St Mary the Virgin, Ross-on-Wye
Minutes of a meeting of the Parochial Church Council
Wednesday 14th November 2018 at 7.30pm in St Mary's Hall

Present: John Setchfield, Janet Cooper (churchwardens), Rev Simon Tarlton (curate), Christine Catanach (Intergenerational Missioner), Canon Freda Davies (Reader), Peter Raddenbury (Treasurer), Bryan Jones, Peter Reynolds, Keith Richards.

1. Opening Prayers. Simon Tarlton opened with prayer.

Paul Eward having resigned as Vice Chair on grounds of ill health, John Setchfield was unanimously elected as Vice Chair for the remainder of the year.

2. Apologies. The Rev Chris Blanchard, The Rev Caroline Pascoe, Karen Vitale (Secretary), Paul Eward, Anne Morris, Anne Remington, Mark Sanderson.

3. Town Council Report. None.

4. Declaration of AOB. Simon Tarlton wished to raise the matter of security lights in the rectory car park, and the question of cover in the church office when Nick Richmond is away.

5. Minutes of the last meeting. Bryan Jones proposed and Peter Raddenbury seconded that the minutes of the meeting of 12 September be accepted as an accurate record. Agreed.

6. Matters Arising. The dog mess situation is much improved.

7. Correspondence. None.

8. Ministerial Business. Simon Tarlton reported that the Remembrance events and services had been a success, and he expressed his thanks to Freda Davies for her work on the children's Experience day. Janet Cooper expressed the parish's thanks to Simon for his work. Freda Davies raised the matter of the lack of any church welcome for the Deputy Lieutenant (the Rev Kay Garlick) at the evening concert in the church on 11 November. That event had been organised by the town council, who had not asked for input from anyone except Simon (at the lighting of the beacon). It was agreed that at any future event in the church we should make sure that a formal welcome from the church was given.

Several new initiatives, planned for some months, had started recently. These included 'Talking to Jesus', attended by 17 people on 13 November, and 'Thinking Film' which provided another opportunity for people to talk about their faith. There had been positive feedback from the first non-Eucharistic All Age Worship service at the end of October.

John Setchfield reported on the meetings held as a result of the vacancy in the living. The six churchwardens from the three parishes had met with the archdeacon on 3 October for a preliminary talk. The Vacancy Review Consultation, led by the Local Ministry Officer, and

open to all inhabitants of the three parishes, had been held on Saturday 3 November and had produced much useful material which Janet Cooper had begun to use to draft the parish Statement of Needs. The next meeting will be the joint meeting of all three PCCs, to be held in the Church Hall on 4 December.

The process of finding a new rector was likely to take at least 6 months and during that time the diocese will try to let the rectory.

Simon Tarlton added that the diocese would be advertising for a new rector after Christmas, with interviews planned for the end of February.

Freda Davies asked whether a video could be made, like the one produced when we advertised for House for Duty priests. It was agreed this would be an excellent idea, and it was hoped Mark Sanderson might be able to produce one.

9. Finance. Peter Raddenbury spoke to his previously circulated report. Two minor changes had been made to it at the Finance Committee meeting in the morning: the difference between the current deficit and that forecast was £10,126 and Walford had not been invoiced for the quarter to the end of September.

Charitable Giving was discussed at some length. £3,650 was available this year. Freda Davies pointed out that when sending money overseas it was important to get good accountability, something much more likely with a larger charity.

Peter Reynolds proposed and Freda Davies seconded the proposal that we divide the money evenly between the Hereford Night Shelter and the Church Missionary Society. Agreed unanimously.

Budget for 2019/20. Peter Raddenbury stated that we were again looking at a deficit budget, but that this was not at the moment a problem as we had £200,000 of reserves in our unrestricted funds. His projected deficit included £24,000 for chairs needed to replace pews in Phase 2 of the reordering, although it was possible some of these chairs might be paid for by individuals. Some money might be needed for repairs to the Hall.

Peter Raddenbury commented on one or two points: the sum for Simon Tarlton's expenses had been raised during the vacancy; the phrase 'Brampton Abbots leavers' should read 'Brampton Abbots years 3 – 4.

Peter Raddenbury proposed and Simon Tarlton seconded that Nick Richmond's salary as Administrator should be raised to £9.05 an hour, continuing it at a level just above the National Living Wage. Agreed unanimously.

Simon raised the matter of cover during Nick's absences. Sue Edwards's departure meant that we had lost our most reliable volunteer. After some discussion, during which it was pointed out that when we had to pay for cover we were essentially paying twice for the same work, it was agreed that we should seek more volunteers, but that for long absences paid cover was essential. Nick should be asked to use volunteers for occasional days if at all possible. It was agreed to put £950 in the budget to pay Lou or Marion to do the administrator's work during Nick's projected 3-week absence next year.

Peter Raddenbury proposed and John Setchfield seconded that the money for the organist

and choir be raised by 2.85 per cent.

Peter Reynolds pointed out that the projected £1,150 a month fund-raising was an essential part of the budget. Peter Raddenbury pointed out that only a Christmas Tree Festival was so far planned as a fund-raising event.

Simon Tarlton proposed and Freda Davies seconded the proposal that the budget be adopted. Agreed unanimously with thanks to Peter Raddenbury for his work.

Church Hire Agreement. Peter Raddenbury had circulated a draft agreement, which would be needed once Phase 2 of the reordering was complete and the church more flexible. He reported that Paul Eward had checked it from the legal point of view.

The only alteration proposed was to the sentence about parking which should be altered to read: 'Parking in the churchyard is very restricted and at the owner's risk'.

It was also agreed that all potential bookings should be referred to the Ministry Team before they reached the point of a hire agreement.

Peter Reynolds proposed and John Setchfield seconded the proposal that the draft hire agreement for the church be accepted. Agreed unanimously.

Terms of Reference for the Church Hall Committee. Peter Raddenbury proposed and Peter Reynolds seconded the proposal that these be accepted. Agreed unanimously.

Peter Raddenbury reported that the changes to the rectory line involving BT and Wyenet should finally take place on 26 November. The main socket would be moved into the office, the line changed from a residential to a business one, and wi fi through Wyenet arranged. There would be some costs, including a charge of £225 plus VAT for the moving of the socket and c. £25 disconnection and reconnection charge from Wyenet. It was agreed that Simon Tarlton should make enquiries with Stephen Herbert as to whether the diocese would assist with these expenses.

The meeting expressed its thanks to Peter Raddenbury for all his work.

10. Safeguarding. Simon Tarlton reported that the 6-monthly review would be due at the next meeting. There were new volunteers involved in 'Toast', 'Leaf' and other new ventures, but none of them was working alone with children or vulnerable adults.

11. Health and Safety. John Setchfield reported that the Hall should be checked when Bryan Jones's work on the new Larder room was complete.

Freda Davies expressed concern about one of the ramps in the church porch.

Christine Catanach reported that she had acquired locks for the cupboard doors and covers for the sockets in the children's room.

12. Friends of St Mary's. Peter Reynolds reported on the meeting held the previous night (13 Nov). Discussions with the Town Council on renewing the flood lighting were proceeding, and plans were being made to look at the newly installed flood lighting at Bromsgrove parish.

The Friends were inviting the PCC to make a formal request for assistance with the expenses

of Phase 2. They could not pay for chairs, but could help fund the new floors. They had £80,000, and the committee would like to spend some of it on Phase 2. Mark Sanderson had agreed to draft the letter of application to the Friends.

The Wellingtonia immediately south of the tower interfered with the flood lighting; avoiding it would add £3,000 – 4,000 to the cost of the new lighting. The Diocesan Advisory Committee had suggested felling it and had advised consulting Adrian Hope, a local arborist. John Setchfield pointed out that both Planning Permission and a Faculty would be necessary for the work. Peter Reynolds agreed to commission the report.

13. St Mary's Hall and St Mary's Church Developments. Bryan Jones reported on the Hall. The structural work in the basement, including the electrical wiring, was complete, but work was still needed on windows and floors.

Simon Tarlton reported that we were grateful for donations from several sources towards the work for the Larder. A grand opening of the new premises is planned for early December. Jill Talbot-Ponsonby would be asked to cut the ribbon and the press would be invited.

The next work to be done would be repairs to the rooms at present occupied by the Larder so that Addaction could move into them. This would free up the other first-floor rooms for parish use or for letting. There was, however, a lot of work to be done. Addaction's rent could be increased.

John Setchfield reported that the faculty for Phase 2 had now been received, as had the tenders for the work. The tenders ranged from c. £27,000 to c. £40,000, and he recommended accepting that from Bayliss, the builders who had done Part 1. Their tender was only c. £2,000 higher than the lowest one received, and they had done an excellent job on Phase 1. It was hoped to start the work early in the new year, which would mean acquiring the chairs quickly.

Freda Davies proposed and Peter Raddenbury seconded the proposal to order the chairs at once.

Peter Reynolds proposed and Peter Raddenbury seconded the proposal to accept Bayliss's tender.

John further reported that a useful and positive meeting had been held with the Diocesan Advisory Committee about Phase 3. The DAC felt that we should get the faculty without too much trouble. The architect would have to do more work before the application was ready. John would be meeting with him and Bayliss shortly.

John further reported that the costs of the lighting, both modifications to the existing lighting and the installation of one or two new lights, were now all in and amounted to c. £4,500 plus VAT. It was proposed to ask the Friends for some of the money.

Finally John reported that the churchyard wall near the Abacus nursery school had recently collapsed. Repairs had started and were likely to cost £2,500 as it was a long stretch of wall. The money would come from the churchyard fund.

14. PA System. Simon Tarlton reported that several people had complained that the system

was not working properly. Bryan Jones had repaired the loop which the builders had severed, and he and Simon had reset the microphones. As a result the sound was much improved. There was now no problem with the spoken word.

The question of visiting bands was discussed, and it was agreed that, as most bands would bring their own equipment, we could not justify the large expense of a new system to accommodate their needs. This meant that the £20,000 earmarked by the Friends for the sound system would not be needed.

Freda Davies suggested the acquisition of a third lapel mike, and Simon Tarlton agreed to investigate.

It was agreed that an improved method of playing CDs at weddings and funerals was needed. Mark Sanderson had a system which we might be able to use, and he would try it out in church.

15. Youth Work. Christine Cattnach spoke to her previously circulated Intergenerational Missioner's report, highlighting the Toast club, which attracted several young mums. In December the Deanery Youth Strategy would be launched at St Mary's, running events to cater for youth from the whole deanery.

Simon Tarlton clarified Christine's employment position. She is employed by the diocese to work in Ross. Since Sarah's departure Simon Tarlton has taken over the incumbent's role in Christine's management.

16. Fund Raising. Simon Tarlton stated that we urgently needed a fund-raising committee. He had spoken to Val Allen who thought some of the previous committee members might be willing to serve again and he would be contacting them. Both he and Mark Sanderson were willing to serve on or chair a revived committee. He proposed a launch at the end of Phase 2, probably with an open day similar to that held at the end of Phase 1.

17. Deanery Synod. The synod had not met since the last PCC. The next meeting was on 5 December.

18. AOB. Simon Tarlton reported that the rectory car park was dangerous in the dark and some lighting was essential. It was suggested that the external light over the office door be put on a timer, to operate from dusk to c. 11 p.m. Stephen Herbert should be consulted to see if the diocese would help with cost.

APCM. As Nick Richmond is away for three weeks in late March/early April next year, it would be necessary for reports to be submitted as soon as possible in the new year.

Next regular meeting 9 January, but members were reminded of the joint PCC meeting on 4 December at 7.30 p.m. in the Hall.

The meeting closed with the Grace at 9.40 p.m.