



## MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

held on **Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2021**  
at 7.00pm in St Mary's Church

**Present:** Sean Semple (Chairman), Bryan Jones (Churchwarden), John Setchfield (Churchwarden), Janet Cooper, Paul Cummings, Freda Davies, Paul Eward, Tiffany Jackson, Paul Mason, Roy Milnes, Peter Reynolds, Rachel Lewis, Mark Sanderson, Rosie Winyard, Caroline Pascoe

### 1. **Chairman's welcome and opening prayers**

The Rector opened the meeting with prayer

### 2 **Closed Churchyard**

i to receive a report from Councillor Rob Taylor

Cllr Taylor informed the PCC that the Town Council has received a quote for approximately £20k to repair the outside wall along Church Street, (removing all old cement/concrete, pointing with lime mortar and creating additional weep holes for drainage). Work could take 72 days. The Town Council would also look in detail at the other issues in the Quinquennial report relating to the closed churchyard.

Cllr Taylor asked members if they would be interested in him exploring the possibility of planting a small part of the closed churchyard as a biblical garden which would be high value and low maintenance. The Town Council will be discussing possible future projects at its next "away day" and Cllr Taylor would like to be able to list this as a suitable project for funding, which would bring both biodiversity and an additional visitor attraction to the churchyard. Members were happy for Cllr Taylor to make further investigations and will look at it again when there is a more detailed plan.

ii to consider an offer of a gift of a Cedar of Lebanon sapling and where it might be planted

The Dean of Hereford has offered a Cedar of Lebanon seedling to the church for planting in either the churchyard or in a community in the town. Cllr Taylor thought the tree could go in the churchyard near the hall but many members felt space this was inappropriate as it would eventually get too big. Alternative locations included the Prospect (for which permission from Balfour Beatty would be required) or a position in the open churchyard which could be identified by the tree surgeon following the tree report which is shortly to be commissioned.

*Cllr Taylor left the meeting at 7.30pm*

### 3. **Apologies**

Apologies were received and accepted from Gerald Altree, Anne Morris and Tim Waters.

### 4. **Rector's Report**

to receive and note a report from the Rector

The Rector's report was noted.

In addition to the report which acknowledged all the ministry work being done, both continuing and new initiatives such as the Baby Loss Service, the Ministry Team had conducted 16 Baptisms, 6 Funerals, 5 Interments, 2 Memorial Services and a Wedding since the last PCC meeting.

Post pandemic, we have the problem of balancing the desire to have full churches, particularly over Christmas, with keeping everyone covid safe. We are also in danger of exhausting a minority who are doing most of the work – we need to share the load far more effectively. In addition, the concern about running out of money is all too real and giving must increase if we are to maintain the work we are doing.

Caroline added that a link with St Mary's Garden Village was being established with another new set of families currently moving in. Christmas activities offered an ideal opportunity to invite new residents to come to St Mary's.

#### **5 Inspiring Faith Portfolio and Inspiring Faith in Schools Portfolios – Peter Reynolds, Paul Mason**

Peter's report was noted. Much work was led by the Ministry Team with lay support. Messy Church, which is combining with the new junior choir, is going very well though Toast families have dropped off. An Alpha Course, led by Alex and Joanna Day is well supported, a further one is planned before Easter.

Paul's report had been circulated. While schools are still very Covid cautious, there have been some good interactions at Brampton Abbots, Ashfield Park and Oak House Nursery. The most recent was when Year 5 children from Ashfield Park spent a session in church (30 in morning & 30 in the afternoon), where they enthusiastically were looking at how the building shows signs of a loving and holy God. Further investigation into the RE syllabus is being looked at by Paul with a view to encouraging the church to become more involved in helping with children's spiritual development.

Mark's "day job" with primary schools has also resulted in an excellent art exhibition on Gilpin in St Mary's. It is hoped that schools will continue to exhibit their work in church.

#### **6 Inspiring Hope Portfolio – Paul Cummings**

to receive a progress report from Paul

Paul spoke about his report which listed many initial links to other organisations. Following discussion with Karen Staunton, Community Hub Development Officer, Paul suggested that the church would be ideal for a Community Hub – this could attract funding of £2,500 which would primarily fund a new display stand and a Computer or Tablet to access the WISH (Wellbeing Information and Signposting for Herefordshire) website. Training would be offered to volunteers (including church welcomers and toast helpers) to help "clients". There was much discussion and some concern was expressed about the church being here for prayer and some peace rather than being a continually busy place and a request for an impact assessment on the church as a worshipping space was made. Herefordshire Council has conducted a needs assessment though there were still some concerns as to whether or not the hub was needed in the church.

Proposed: Paul Cummings

Seconded: Roy Milnes 11 for 2 against 1 abstention

**It was resolved to complete an application to become a Talk Community Hub, to be submitted through the Standing Committee.**

- 7 Inspiring Love Portfolio – Rosie Winyard**  
i to receive a progress report from Rosie

Rosie's report highlighting achievements to date and future plans had been circulated well before the meeting.

- ii to agree to aspire to St Mary's Church, Ross-on-Wye becoming Carbon Neutral by 2030

Discussion revolved around what we need to do to achieve a net zero carbon footprint and how it we do it. Everyone agreed it was important but concerns about costs when we have no money were expressed. Rosie had originally asked for the PCC to commit to becoming Carbon Neutral by 2030 but members were wary of making a commitment they were unsure they could fulfil. It was eventually agreed,

Proposed: Rosie Winyard                      Seconded: Paul Mason                      unanimous

- a) to authorise Rosie to investigate what is involved in an energy audit and following this, the Standing Committee decide whether or not to go ahead with an audit at a cost of £450.  
b) to send information on seminars and webinars to PCC members in order to help understanding the issues  
c) to arrange a visit to St Weonards Church to see the viability of their solar panels (Sean and Rosie).  
d) to request advice and an idea from the church's architect of installing solar panels on the church roof (John).  
e) to request a quote for solar panels for the church from Cutter Solar (Freda).

**8 Minutes of the last meetings**

to approve as a correct record the minutes of the meetings held on 8<sup>th</sup> September and 31<sup>st</sup> October 2021 and note that the October Minutes will remain confidential.

The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman.

**9 Queen's Platinum Jubilee**

to receive a report from the Jubilee Committee following initial proposals circulated on 10<sup>th</sup> October

The paper of initial ideas had been circulated. The lieutenancy office had been very pleased with the response from Ross for celebrating the jubilee.

The Jubilee Committee was meeting again in January and the Town Council was also working with the group in organising different events over the bank holiday.

**10 Standing Committee Report**

to ratify a decision made by the Standing Committee on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2021 to contract Alex Day to renew and repair the ramp and steps to St Mary's Hall at a cost of £1,821.68

Proposed: Mark Sanderson                      Seconded: Peter Reynolds                      unanimous

**It was resolved to ratify the decision made by the Standing Committee on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2021 to contract Alex Day to renew and repair the ramp and steps to St Mary's Hall at a cost of £1,821.68**

Members were grateful to Alex for his excellent work in making the ramp safe again.

**11 Finance Report**

to receive and note a report from the Treasurer

i. A computer glitch had caused the treasurer a huge problem with some data being lost. He was working on restoring this with Geoff Balsom who volunteers with the CDT.

ii. The Stewardship Campaign

This has so far realised £153 increase in the Parish Giving Scheme – well short of the £2,000 hoped for. The Rector would bring this to the attention of the congregations and further action would be taken in the new year.

iii. Salary increases

Proposed: Roy Milnes      Seconded: Sean Semple      14 for      1 abstention  
**It was resolved to offer an increase of 3.2% on the remuneration of the Organist and the Director of Music from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2022**

Proposed: Roy Milnes      Seconded: John Setchfield      unanimous  
**It was resolved that the salary of the Administrative Assistant be increased to 10p per hour above the Real Living Wage**

iv. Christian Giving

The Ross CDT had been nominated to receive money from the amount put aside for Christian Giving. A further suggestion was made to give money to Embrace, a Christian charity, recommended by the Dean of Hereford, working in the Middle East in particular Lebanon (as a thank you for the tree from that country).

It was agreed to invite further expressions of interest from the congregations. The Standing Committee would draft a proposal for the January meeting based on the responses received.

v. Method of Accounting

Proposed: Roy Milnes      Seconded: Sean Semple      unanimous  
**It was resolved that the accounts for 2021 and subsequent years be produced on a receipts and payments basis**

vi. Table of Fees

Paul Cummings asked members to agree the discretionary fees for 2022 for weddings and funerals etc (the document is on the PCC page of the website).

Proposed: Paul Cummings      Seconded: Roy Milnes      unanimous  
**It was resolved accept the proposed figures for discretionary fees for occasional services for 2022 as read out by Paul and as set out in the fees table on the website**

**12 St Mary's Church building – John Setchfield**

i. to receive the Quinquennial Report and a summary of actions required

John had circulated a report outlining the main findings of the architect. There are 44 pages of detail including 64 prioritised actions costing approximately £74k. The most urgent actions have been completed and the remainder will begin as soon as we are able and funds permit.

ii. to receive a summary of the insurance inspection and agree any immediate actions required

The inspection report has identified four requirements which overlap with those in the Quinquennial Report.

John will contact Sean Hudson about the required electrical inspection as his firm did all the reordering electrics and also again follow up Mark's lighting enquiry.  
As a result of the visit the Loss Limit for the buildings has been increased from £27m to £30m and an increase in premium of approx. 11% is being proposed for next year.  
Some work is to be done on the grounding of the lightning conductors which have failed inspection.

In the open churchyard it is necessary to have all the trees inspected for safety.

Proposed: John Setchfield      Seconded: Bryan Jones      unanimous

**It was resolved to engage an arboriculturist to inspect, report on and map all the trees within the open churchyard at a cost of £1,000.**

iii to receive an update on the progress of installing a defibrillator for the church  
Enquiries with the British Heart Foundation are ongoing.

**13 St Mary's Hall**

to receive a report from Peter Reynolds

The Hall Committee is still waiting for the first 6 months' rent from the tenant but it is not anticipated that this will be a problem.

Lighting in the main hall is being replaced at a cost of £240 with the work being undertaken by Bryan.

**14 Fundraising & Social Committee**

to receive a report from the Fundraising Committee

A report had been circulated outlining the events planned over the next few months. The next one is the Christmas Tree Festival from 20<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> November, a major fundraising event. Stewards are still required and members were urged to sign up if possible.

**15 Safeguarding**

to receive and note a report and agree any actions arising from it

Since the emergency meeting there was nothing to report.

The Action Plan is taking shape and members were able to see it.

**16 Health and Safety**

to consider and agree any actions required

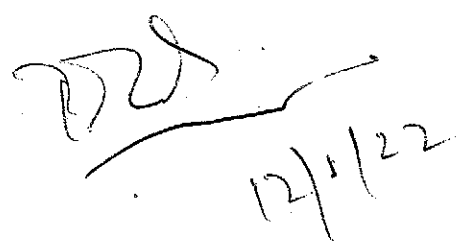
Work on the Lightning Conductor as identified in the Insurance Inspection report has been given the go ahead.

**17 Date of next meeting**

the next meeting will take place on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2022 at 7.00pm

A Parish Vision Day will take place on Saturday 22nd January 2022

The meeting closed with the Grace at 9.30pm.



Handwritten signature and date: 12/1/22