

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

held on **Tuesday 21st November 2023**
at 7.00pm in St Mary's Hall

Present: Sean Semple (Chairman), Bryan Jones, Mark Sanderson, Roy Milnes, Paul Eward, Melanie Mellor, Gerald Altree, Janet Cooper, Paul Cummings, Philip Dazeley, Julian Hallett, Rachel Lewis, Peter Reynolds, Mike Donovan and Caroline Pascoe. Cllr Rob Taylor.

1 **Opening prayers**

Sean opened the meeting with a poem by Yehuda Amichai an Israeli poet, The place when we are right <https://www.journeywithjesus.net/poemsandprayers/454-yehuda-amichai-the-place-where-we-are-right> followed by prayer.

2 **Closed Churchyard**

Councillor Rob Taylor informed members that work on the wall along Church Street had been approved and would be started soon.

The tarmac path had now been completed.

He mentioned the Environment Act 2021 – section 105. Local nature recovery strategies can be plotted .e.g. in the Open Churchyard. This will give credence to the PCC in the event of complaints about long grass.

There are some quinquennial issues in the closed churchyard including the plague cross which need attention.

Paul Cummings asked that our thanks be passed to the council for their work towards Remembrance, particularly in tidying up the Prospect.

Cllr Taylor left at 7.13pm

3 **Youth Report**

to receive a report from Tyron, our Youth Representative
Tyron was not in attendance.

4 **Apologies**

to receive and accept apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Anne Morris, Rosie Winyard and Freda Davies.

5 **Safeguarding**

to receive an update and take any necessary action on any safeguarding matter

The action plan which shows all is in hand was noted. Thanks were expressed by the Rector to Judith for keeping us up to date.

6 **Minutes of the last meeting**

i to approve and sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 19th September 2023

The minutes of 19th September were approved and signed by the Chairman.

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- ii to note any matters arising from the minutes which do not appear elsewhere on the agenda
 - a The new lighting is now complete
 - b The screen and projector are now installed
 - c Bike rack – there was nothing to report
 - d Warm space – Paul Cummings explained that the Ross Community Development Trust had taken this on with support from the Community Larder.

7 Standing Committee decisions on behalf of the PCC

to ratify decisions made by the Standing Committee since the last meeting

- i. to apply for a Booker's Card (Cash & Carry wholesaler) on behalf of the PCC
- ii. to charge the Penyard Singers the advertised rate for the hire of the church for their next concert following a request for a discount
- iii. to agree to apply to the diocese for permission to install a stone with an A3 size plaque for the Museum without Walls next to the Plague Cross

Proposed: Peter Reynolds Seconded: Philip Dazeley unanimous

It was resolved to ratify the above decisions.

8 PCC decisions made through an email vote

to note the following decision agreed by the PCC unanimously via email and confirmed by the Rector on 2nd November 2023 to support welcoming the diocese's offer to take on the LifeLink employment and reporting functions for us

This decision was noted

9 Rector's Report

The Rector reported on Discipleship and Mission

Discipleship

- Theme for Advent: "Messages of hope in tough times".
- Bible Study based on "The Shack" to be offered before Lent by David.
- Lent: Course: "Forgiveness" led by +Anthony Priddis at Walford Church from 15th February to the 21st March 2024 between 7.30 pm and 9 pm.

Mission

- Inspiring Faith and Inspiring Faith in Schools to be combined in one portfolio known as "Inspiring Faith" and that within the portfolio there should be a distinction between inspiring faith in young people (overseen by Anne) and inspiring faith in adults (overseen by Peter).
- The areas of focus of each portfolio are being reconsidered and placed under the best portfolio for engagement.
- Creation of a Life-link Hub to place intergenerational thinking at the heart of our benefice vision and operation.
- Monthly lay led services recommenced at Goodrich Court

10 Life-link Chaplain

- i to receive an update on the bid to employ a Life-link chaplain

A decision was made by the Diocesan Board of Finance to approve the application to employ a Life-link Chaplain in Ross. This has also been warmly welcomed by head of JKHS. Questions were asked about the timetable. Job descriptions will go out after the Bishop's Council meets in January and the Diocese will help with advertising. It is hoped that someone will be appointed in the summer, possibly to start during the summer term and if not, September.

Peter Reynolds spoke on behalf of us all in thanking Caroline and Sean for all their work.

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- ii to approve the formation of the Life-link Hub Team, in anticipation of success of the bid, consisting of all Portfolio Leaders, the Rector, Caroline Pascoe, Mark Sanderson, the Life-link Chaplain, the Associate Priest in Walford and other co-opted members

Proposed: Sean Semple Seconded: Bryan Jones unanimous

It was resolved to approve the formation of the Life-link Hub consisting of members described above.

11 Benefice Administrator

to receive an update on the recruitment process of a new administrator

15 applications have been received with a closing date of 24th November. Long, then shortlisting will undertaken by Murray Alston (Walford), Elaine Leney (Brampton Abbots), Mark Sanderson (Ross) and Sean. Interviews will be conducted by Mark, Sean and Elaine.

12 Finance

- i. to note a report from the Treasurer

Roy's report included notes on the items below. In addition he talked about the curate's house in Redwood Close which is one third owned by the parish and two thirds by the diocese. The Diocese expects us to pay one third of repair expenses although we have not received any rent from them for our share while the curate was living there. We anticipate receiving a third of the rent when it is let while there is no curate.

Members felt this was unfair as the Diocese would normally pay the full cost of housing a curate. The Secretary and Treasurer were asked to write to the diocese to find out exactly what the criteria are for housing curates and what the responsibilities of a parish and Diocese are where the curate's house is part owned by the parish.

- ii. to agree the current Administrator's salary for 2024 (only if the current administrator is still in post in January)

Proposed: Roy Milnes Seconded: Peter Reynolds unanimous

It was resolved to increase the current administrator's hourly rate of pay to £12.10 from January 2024.

- iii. to review the Director of Music and Organist salaries for 2024

Proposed: Roy Milnes Seconded: Paul Cummings 13 for, Mark Sanderson and
Julian Hallett abstained

It was resolved increase the salaries of the Director of Music and the Organist by 6.7%.

- iv. to consider Christian Giving for 2023

Proposed: Roy Milnes Seconded: Peter Reynolds unanimous

It was resolved to give £1,500 to the Disasters Emergency Committee for use in Ukraine, £1,500 to Medical Aid for Palestinians for their work in the former British Mandate of Palestine and £1,500 to Christian Aid)

- v. to agree the 2024 discretionary fees for occasional services (weddings and funerals)

Proposed: Paul Cummings Seconded: Peter Reynolds unanimous

It was resolved not to increase the fees due to the Benefice in 2024

- vi. to consider utilising the surplus from the Hannah Purchas Fund for the Poor Fund to support a local charity

This was noted for when it is needed

13 Inspiring Faith in Schools

to receive and note a written report on recent work

The report from Anne Morris was noted. There had been plenty of work being carried out in our schools and with our young people

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14 Churchwardens' report on St Mary's Church building and churchyard

- i. to receive progress reports on Faculty Applications
Faculties for the projector and Screen and transfer of the processional cross from Brampton Abbots have now been granted
- ii. to receive an update on plans to enlarge the nave altar platform
Mark has met with Deborah Johnson, an architect from Hook Mason who will draw up the necessary plans. She has submitted her quote for overseeing the project at a cost of £2,200 + VAT + expenses. A faculty will need to be applied for and money raised (hopefully from a grant) to cover the total cost (£5,000 has already been given for this project).

Proposed: Mark Sanderson Seconded: Paul Cummings unanimous

It was resolved to accept the quote of £2,200 + VAT + expenses to oversee work to enlarge the nave platform and apply for a Faculty for this.

- iii. to note the installation of a new compost bin
This was completed by John Setchfield and Mark under the supervision of Alan Sonn and is looking good.
- iv. to agree to begin the process to close the open churchyard
Bevan's have now signed a document to confirm that the churchyard is full with the exception of the Garden of Remembrance which will remain open for the burial of cremated remains. In addition, where there is already a faculty for burial, this will be able to take place and any cremated remains will be able to go into existing graves. Notice will need to be put in the Ross Gazette and on Social Media to ensure the people of Ross are aware of the proposal to close it. It will take at least 12 months in order for the Local Authority to have time to budget for its future maintenance.

Proposed: Mark Sanderson Seconded: Roy Milnes unanimous

It was resolved to apply to the Ministry of Justice to close the open churchyard.

- v. to consider the addition of more speakers in the nave
It was agreed that further investigation into costs of keeping two temporary speakers should be made
- vi. to note that applications for memorial benches in the churchyard will be in line with those of the Town Council
This was noted
- vii. Quinquennial Report Progress
Little has been made. The report and action points have been noted previously. There are some very expensive jobs to do and help with grant applications would be much appreciated by the churchwardens.
<https://rossbenefice.files.wordpress.com/2023/09/quinquennial-report-action-points.docx>

15 St Mary's Hall

to receive a report from the Hall Committee.

Bryan Jones had been on the roof to investigate a leak in the roof causing a hole in the ceiling by the Turning Point office. The only problem appeared to be moss in the gutters which he cleared. He applied resin to the area and put extra tiles. All the flashing was intact. He will now repair the ceiling. While on the roof, he discovered a substantial crack in the wall which will need to be fixed by a builder as soon as possible.

16 Fun, Food and Funds Committee

to note that the Christmas Tree Festival is from 25th - 28th November which will only be a success if everyone helps!

There will be a concert amongst the trees (Friends), Mellstock Band on the Saturday evening and a special Christmas Tree Festival Evensong to include the junior choir on Sunday evening.

A thank you coffee morning was held for all the cake and soup makers who have worked so hard throughout the year (to enjoy cake they had not made themselves!).

This was noted

17 Health & Safety

to receive a verbal report from the Health & Safety Officer and take any necessary action
The bell ringers reported that the emergency lighting in the tower was not working. A new battery will be installed. They had also been discussing their risk assessment and health and safety in the tower – they have no emergency exit! Various steps have been taken to reduce fire risk in the ringing chamber. It was suggested further advice might be obtained from the Guild of Bell Ringers.

18 Date of next Meeting

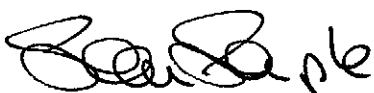
to note the next meeting will be held on Tuesday 16th January 2024 at 7pm in St Mary's Hall and the Vision Day was confirmed to take place on Saturday 17th February 2024

19 Review of meeting and closing prayer

Following a CPAS training evening attended by the Rector and Secretary on running PCC meetings, the Rector felt that the idea of having a brief review of the meeting was a good one. The Rector invited members to say how they felt the Kingdom of God had been advanced through this meeting.

Everyone felt the work being carried out to appoint a Life-link Chaplain would play a big role. Improvements to the church (such as audio-visual equipment) allow us to share the Gospel more easily in the church building. The work in schools reported was also noted.

The meeting closed with a prayer at 8.30pm



16 Jan 24