

ST PETER'S, TIVERTON

Parochial Church Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 23 January 2020 at 7 pm in the Tiverton Hotel

Present: Mary Seaton (in the chair), the Revd Robert Gordon, Christopher Burford, David Catchpole, Helen Fensome, Kate Henshall, Rod Hilton, Jean Jenner, Deborah Lal, Averil Long, Catherine Makepeace, Jennifer Palmer, Christopher Shields, Richard Stenlake, Vicki Stuckey and William Zarrett.

Apologies: Gill Heard, David Pope, David Ricks, Roy Webber and Keith White.

The meeting opened with prayer.

1 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 14 November 2019 were approved and signed.

2 Matters arising from the minutes

Pastoral care (minute 5): CM reported that the augmented pastoral care group had been working hard on the production of documents required under the Safer Recruitment procedures. These should be finalised shortly and would provide a template for other relevant groups, the first of which would be the Baptism Team. The overall policy of the parish was therefore taking shape and being precisely defined in a way that offered protection to all concerned.

3 Safeguarding

3.1 *Guidance for lone workers*: This had been reviewed and revised, cf. appendix to these minutes. Such guidance covered, among other things, procedure for the handling of donations to the church. Consultation with the Diocese had been important in the production of all policies in the area of safeguarding.

3.2 *Review of past cases*: The Bishop had required each parish to review past cases, if there were any, of complaints against clergy and church officers, and of action taken if such issues had arisen. After thorough investigation RG had found no evidence of this sort in St Peter's. No member of the PCC had any such recollection, and therefore RG was authorized to return signed confirmation that this was the case.

4 Music at St Peter's

Following the death of Andrew Curtis, and with his funeral due to take place on 28 January, it was felt that any discussion of future plans would at this stage be inappropriate. A preliminary meeting had been held involving RG, CB, GH and WZ, and further discussion about the process of appointing a new director of music would take place in due time.

5 Worship

RS introduced the minutes of the Worship Committee meeting on 10 January. He commented on the very successful Christmas services, describing the Christingle service in particular as 'a triumph'.

The question of the audibility of the choir was raised, for which new microphones would be needed. WZ observed that the necessary wiring is in fact in place, and it is now a matter of obtaining advice as to the best available system and an estimate of the cost involved. It was noted that since this would be no more than an extension of the recently installed sound system no faculty would be needed.

The PCC endorsed the minutes of the Worship Committee meeting.

6 Finance

- 6.1 *Stewardship*: RH reported that there had been no meeting of the Finance Committee, but he introduced a report on stewardship compiled by Helen Wakely. The good news was that overall the total giving for 2019 was almost £2k higher than for 2018: £41,909.04 compared with £39,988.50. The average number of subscribers to the Parish Giving Scheme was 45 (2018: 43).

Since the last meeting of the PCC a 'thank you letter' had been written to all of those giving by standing order or by envelope. Copies of the PGS application form had been distributed in the pews, and it was encouraging to report that although one anonymous donor had been lost in January, two new ones had been gained.

The PCC was asked for their help in encouraging their friends within the Church to look at the application forms in the pews and to consider joining the PGS, given that it is by far the most effective and efficient way by which the Church receives a regular income. It was observed that raising with friends the question of giving was not easy, but every possible effort would be made.

- 6.2 *Financial report and budget*: CS made his initial report on the financial situation, specifically a summary of the out-turn for 2019 and the new budget for 2020.

For 2019, income of £77,454 (budget £74,657) and expenditure of £88,941 (budget £106,396) had produced an outcome deficit of £11,487 (budget deficit £31,739). The main causes of the divergence from budget expectation were a small increase in giving but mainly the fact that we only spent £3,659 on planned maintenance against a budget of £16,000, i.e. a notional saving of £12,341. The lack of an office assistant also meant that the budgeted sum of £3,000 remained unspent. The expenditure on emergency maintenance stood at minus £33, the reason for this being that an insurance claim had been received in advance of the invoice for the work.

The budget for 2020 had been set at £68,341 income against £100,296 expenditure, i.e. a net budget deficit of £31,955.

7 Fabric

WZ introduced the minutes of the Fabric Committee meeting on 7 January, drawing particular attention to two matters.

- 7.1 *Churchyard trees* (minute 3e): Now that the trimming of the trees could no longer be undertaken by members of the Tuesday group, the employment of professionals for this exercise would be necessary and inevitably expensive.
- 7.2 *Misuse of the boiler room* (minute 4m): Teenagers had apparently been abusing the lighting fixtures at the rear of the church building, and using a space above the heating duct below the wall as a hideaway, both problems of which the police were aware. A caging structure, which might prove costly, needed to be constructed to prevent this practice from continuing.

The PCC endorsed the minutes of the Fabric Committee meeting.

8 Project management

DR had sent a report on the current situation vis-à-vis preparation of the submission to the Diocesan Advisory Committee.

The application for a faculty for the reordering was in the process of being uploaded on to the DAC online system on the day of the PCC meeting. As the architect sent drawings through they were being added to the application until the whole was complete. The architect was using all the time available to ensure that the information supplied was as comprehensive and acceptable as possible.

The chief (and only) Church Buildings Adviser, Nigel Pratt, knew about our application and was able to see it being compiled on line. The architect had a promise from him that our application would have a place on the next DAC agenda provided he received on 27 January.

The DAC meeting for February had been delayed until Thursday 13 February. The architect still remained very positive about the committee's reaction to our application, bearing in mind all the preparatory work already done with the DAC in late 2017.

9 Deanery questionnaire response

- 9.1 RG introduced the questionnaire, drawing attention to the structures of synodical government within which such a response should be set. He emphasised the distinction between 'external' relationships with parishes elsewhere in the Tiverton and Cullompton Deanery and internal matters concerning the wellbeing of St Peter's itself. The overlap between the two, however, was the matter of the allocation of full-time equivalent clergy posts, which were expected to be reduced in number from 10 to 9 by 2022. His suggestion was that our approach should be informed by the requirement to maintain the current mission community distribution while at the same time nurturing relations between the different communities and allowing each to concentrate on its own strengths. This did not mean that each church needed to demonstrate all the marks of a healthy Christian community.

It was agreed that after RG had completed the questionnaire on behalf of St Peter's, copies would be circulated to all members of the PCC.

- 9.2 It was recognised that consideration of the questionnaire had stimulated thought about the 'internal' life of St Peter's, and that this would be very appropriately the subject of a separate and extended discussion in the PCC. There remained some PCC members who had not sent to RG their suggestions about the deanery response, and it was requested that they should do so by 31 January.

It was agreed that the small group of members who had been discussing the response to the questionnaire should continue in discussion of the broader 'wellbeing' issues, and that there should be an extra PCC meeting on 26 February devoted exclusively to taking this discussion further.

10 Annual Parochial Church Meeting on 16 April

- 10.1 It was agreed that the safeguarding representative should always be an *ex officio* member of the PCC, and that as long as the reordering project was in process the same should be true of the project co-ordinator. Consequently, CM and DR would not need to stand for election to the PCC when the current period of their co-option expired.
- 10.2 St Peter's continues to be allocated 3 representatives on the Deanery Synod. Given the retirement without replacement of Sally Mundy in 2019, and the decisions of MS and RS not to stand for re-election this year, there would need to be an election for all 3 places at the APCM.

10.3 On the assumption that the current size of the PCC should remain unchanged, the number of representatives of the laity would stand at 12 (in addition to the *ex officio* members). Of current members, CB and JP have completed their first three-year term and are eligible for re-election; HF and KW have completed their second three-year term and are not eligible for re-election.

11 Any other business

The forthcoming trio of *Theology Quest and Questions in Tiverton* sessions on 6, 13 and 20 February would be devoted to the subject of 'Spiritual care at the end of life in a 21st century hospice'. The sessions would be led by the Revd Ann Fulton, the Spiritual Care Coordinator at St Margaret's Hospice Care in Taunton, and would be held in St Peter's Church at a cost per person of £6 per session (£15 for the whole trio). It was hoped that this important subject would draw a large number of participants.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.59 pm.

Signed:

Date: