

St Peter's Church
Finance Committee

Minutes of the meeting held at 7pm on 7 January 2021 by Zoom

Present: William Zarrett (Chairman), Chris Shields (Treasurer), Rev Robert Gordon, David Ricks, Janet Rendle, Vicki Stuckey, Helen Wakely.

Apologies: Gill Heard, Roy Webber.

1. The chairman opened the meeting with a prayer and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Treasurer's Report

Preliminary Results for 2020

a. Income

Planned giving and tax recovered (gift aid) are both ahead of expectations.

General collections are down on budget as the Church has been closed during the year.

Baptisms, weddings and funerals are slightly inflated by a prepayment from LeRoys for a January funeral.

No grant has been received from MDDC for churchyard maintenance. It will be requested (by CS) for 2021.

Fundraising will be netted out at £12k – a fantastic result after the 'Give a little, help a lot' and Christmas fair events. Over £1k was also raised in gift aid from these events (with more to come in the first payment for 2021).

b. Expenditure

Many expenses are reduced as a result of the Church not being open for a number of months.

Planned maintenance could not all be undertaken. It is likely to be higher in 2021 and this has been accounted for in the 2021 budget.

Emergency maintenance includes work on the windows and the security grills around the boiler room.

There were no salaries for either an Office Assistant or Director of Music.

The end result is a deficit of £9k in an exceptional year. The projection had been for just under £32k deficit.

CS also noted that he had attended eight hours of zoom instruction for new treasurers by the Diocese, which had been very helpful.

Particular thanks were offered to CS for his preparation and maintenance of the accounts.

Proposed Budget for 2021

CS presented the 2021 budget, which had been drawn up initially by the Budget Working Group with some adjustment since.

Of particular note, both income and expenditure have been budgeted conservatively and cautiously.

The Common Fund budget has dropped as a result of the number of church participants falling. The budget allows for the appointment of both Office Assistant and Director of Music. Their appointment will be a priority for 2021.

The overall result is a projected deficit of around £36k.

WZ noted that the parish's investments at the year-end are around £1.5 million. This total is slightly reduced from last year because some funds have been withdrawn but the investments themselves have not significantly reduced in value; a very good result considering the disruption during the year.

The Committee noted that the church magazine is likely to become entirely digital with minimal costs involved in its preparation. It recommended to the PCC that we suspend any charges for the magazine and do not collect any annual subscriptions for it.

The Committee unanimously recommended the adoption of the 2021 budget by the PCC.

3. Proposed Fee Schedule for 2021

RG introduced the following proposed table of fees for 2021.

In general the fees have risen very slightly and this year have been harmonised with those of Chevithorne and St Andrew's. It is proposed that heating only be charged for from 1 October to 30 April. The Church is now sending out invoices showing the fees being charged. The DBF have also allowed the Parish to retain a proportion of some of the costs eg £30 of the funeral fee at a crematorium.

Statutory Fees

The Table of Parochial Fees 2021 has been published by the Church Commissioners as follows:

Marriages

Publication of banns	£ 31.00 (of which the DBF receives £00 and the PCC £31)
Certificate of banns	£ 15.00 (of which the DBF receives £00 and the PCC £15)
Marriage service	£464.00 (of which the DBF receives £211 and the PCC £253)
Marriage certificate	£ 11.00 (of which the DBF receives £00 and the PCC £11)

Funerals

Service in church	£199.00 (of which the DBF receives £108 and the PCC £91)
Service at crematorium, cemetery or funeral director's chapel	£199.00 (of which the DBF receives £169 and the PCC £30)

Local Fees

We will continue to inform marrying couples and local funeral directors of items that are optional, and propose the following charges for 2021:

Weddings and Funerals

Organist	£ 70.00
Choir	£ 95.00
Verger	£ 25.00

Bells	£120.00
Heating	£ 50.00 from 1 st October to 30 th April inclusive

Mileage

The Diocesan rate remains at 45p per mile. We will continue to charge as follows:

St Peter's and / or Tiverton Cemetery	£ 8.00
Exeter or Taunton Crematorium	£18.00
East Devon or Barnstaple Crematorium	£28.00

The Committee agreed unanimously to recommend the adoption of the above fees for 2021 by the PCC.

4. Stewardship Report

HW had circulated her report ahead of the meeting. She was able to report three items of good news.

a. Our year end results for 2020

As has previously been reported, our on-going Church finances this year have been saved by our membership of the Parish Giving Scheme. Most pleasing of all is that there have not been any significant change in the numbers subscribing despite the Church building being inaccessible for services for a large part of the year. Interestingly, it has emerged that only 53% of the diocese's parishes had adopted the PGS and those who did not have struggled significantly this year.

The trend of giving has been to move away from envelope and standing order giving towards the Parish Giving Scheme.

The comparative totals are as follows:

Cumulative totals		2020	2019	Difference
		12 months	12 months	
Parish Giving Scheme	£ NGA	3214	3383	-168
	£ GA	26799	24702	2097
	£ GA tax	6572	6176	397
Average No		47	45	2
One off Gift Aid	£	8682	4489	4192
Envelopes	£ NGA	105	468	-363
	£ GA	402	1378	-976

Note: includes £4k donation

Standing Orders	£	1119	1314	-195
	£ Total	46894	41909	4985

It is now possible to provide five years of comparative material since we subscribed to the PGS.

		2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
		£	£	£	£	£
Parish Giving Scheme		36586	34260	33067	31961	29822
OOGA		8682	4489	3321	4152	4544
Envelopes	Non Gift					
	Aid	105	468	804	1438	1944
	Gift Aid	402	1378	1484	1527	2218
Standing Orders		1119	1314	1314	1469	3179
Total		46894	41909	39990	40547	41707

It is important that we continue to encourage those church members who have not yet joined to do so.

b. Our latest HMRC gift reclaim

At the beginning of January, the Church's submission to HMRC for the months from October to December 2020 was made. This resulted in a claim for £1259.59.

c. Thank you letters written

Since the last Finance Committee, all of those who donate to the Church by weekly envelope or by standing order have been contacted to be thanked for their valued contributions.

Last year, those giving by envelope were advised that 2020 was the last year that the envelopes would be used, so this year, they were thanked in the usual way and asked to contact the Parish Giving Recorder if they would consider regular giving by another method.

We now have an on-line facility set up which can be used for donations at any time from now onwards. Hopefully we can find further ways to encourage its usage! One family is currently using this facility to make their regular donation to the Church; another option for those who do not wish to join the PGS.

HW indicated that it was a great credit to our Church membership that they have continued to support St Peter's this year despite our limited opportunity to gather together.

The Committee thanked HW for her gentle and sensitive approach to her stewardship work.

5. General Fund Raising

WZ and VS both praised the work of Mary Seaton and Sally Mundy for their determination and leadership for the two major fundraising initiatives in 2020 – Give a little, help a lot and the Christmas Fair.

Efforts are now being made to identify a project for 2021, which would not only raise funds for St Peter's but also help the community. Something that would enable St Peter's to connect with the local community. CHAT had been approached but had only identified small projects so far.

JR will approach the Town Council.

6. Update on Financial Aspects of Re-ordering

DR reported that requests for tenders have now been sent out and these are likely to be considered up to March. A special PCC meeting will be held to go through the tenders and make the final decision as to what can be afforded.

It was confirmed that the architects' fees will be taken out of the £500k budget for re-ordering.

The final faculties have not yet been secured with permission from the Diocesan Chancellor but they are expected to be a formality now.

7. Any other business

None was reported.

8. Date of next meeting

4th March 2021 at 7pm via Zoom.