

ST PETER'S, TIVERTON

Parochial Church Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 6 May 2021 at 7 pm by Zoom

Present: Mary Seaton (in the chair), the Revd Robert Gordon, David Catchpole, Emma Down, Joanna Hall-Tomkin, Gill Heard, Kate Henshall, Jean Jenner, Averil Long, Catherine Makepeace, Sally Mundy, Jennifer Palmer, David Ricks, Chris Shields, Richard Stenlake and William Zarrett.

Apologies: Deborah Lal and Vicki Stuckey.

The meeting opened with prayer.

1 Welcome

Robert Gordon welcomed Gill Heard and William Zarrett as re-elected church wardens, and also Emma Down, Jean Jenner, Averil Long, Sally Mundy and David Catchpole to membership of the PCC for 2021-24.

2 Co-option

The PCC accepted the proposal from the Standing Committee that Roy Webber be co-opted to membership for the coming year, with appreciation of his work and advice in the areas of publicity and fund-raising.

3 Election of officers for 2021/22

For the coming year Mary Seaton, David Catchpole, Chris Shields and Catherine Makepeace were elected as vice-chair, secretary, treasurer, and safeguarding officer and electoral roll officer respectively.

4 Duties and responsibilities of trustees

At this first meeting of the PCC year the responsibilities attaching to membership were reviewed.

4.1 Under the Charities Act (1993) all PCC members are trustees responsible for all the PCC's financial activity (though without individual liability for any monies). Since St Peters is fortunate in currently having funds totalling over £1.5m.

It is the duty of PCC members to monitor all income, including giving, donations, legacies, wedding and funeral fees, magazine adverts and sales, fundraising and any other activities; likewise, with expenditure, notably the Common Fund, insurance, utilities, maintenance, staff salaries, fees and expenses. Most of this work is carried out by the treasury team (sidespersons, cashiers and counters, fundraisers, treasurer) and overseen by the Finance Committee. This Committee reports regularly to the PCC. Trustees should be satisfied that adequate safeguards against fraud or error are in place, and ask questions if in doubt.

The Parish Giving Scheme was adopted *nem con* by the PCC five years ago. When PCC members join – as the hope is that they will – it is a sign to the congregation at large of a quite essential benefit accruing to St Peter's. For all concerned, the PGS is certainly the easiest, the most efficient and discreet, method of regular church giving. It has proved invaluable during the period of the covid lockdown: those parishes who use it have been protected financially, while others are facing considerable difficulty.

- 4.2 'Fit and Proper Persons': Members of the PCC have already begun the process of signing the forms of declaration and thus responding to the requirement to comply with the 2010 legislation that requires churches (and other charities) that reclaim Gift Aid to be able to demonstrate that they and any church staff and volunteers who manage church funds are 'fit and proper persons'.

5 Minutes and matters arising

- 5.1 The minutes of the meetings on 18 March and 8 April 2021 were approved and signed. There were no matters arising from the minutes of the latter meeting.
- 5.2 *Paper edition of the parish magazine* (cf. 18 March: minute 6): There was an extended discussion of the value of a magazine that could be put into the hands of readers, both members of St Peter's and visitors. It was recognised that not everyone has the means or perhaps the inclination to read its content online.

RG pointed out that during the lockdown period we have conformed scrupulously to the Church of England's advice concerning the (non-)publication of parish magazines in paper form, and that we would therefore either have to make a firm decision to ignore that advice or wait for the advice to be changed. There was in fact a possibility that the advice was indeed about to be changed.

RG observed that the process of producing a printed version involved a lot of work by a team of people. A magazine group of persons responsible for planning and practical coverage had been in existence in earlier years but had in time been disbanded: that might well need to be reassembled. WZ noted that Ivor and Sue Atkins had in the past looked after all negotiations with advertisers, and the PCC's gratitude had been conveyed to them following their decision to retire. A team of other helpers had also been active as the production process moved through its various stages month by month, which meant that for a paper version of the magazine to reappear new people would have to be found to share responsibility, and such people were *prima facie* thin on the ground. KH offered to have a conversation with WZ about what might be done.

- 5.3 *Heating system* (18 March: minutes 8.2-3): DR reported that replacement of the control system had become unavoidable, and a quotation from our heating contractors *MBH Industrial Services Ltd* was anticipated.

6 Annual vestry meeting and APCM

The draft minutes of the meetings on 15 April were received and noted: there were no matters arising from those minutes that required immediate action.

7 Safeguarding

CM observed that all the necessary procedures in the area of safeguarding were defined and in place. She would be pursuing actively all that needed to be done to implement the safer recruitment guidelines and policies for all our groups of volunteers.

8 PCC committees

Proposals from the Standing Committee for membership of committees during the coming year were agreed *nem con* (cf. appendix to these minutes).

9 Worship

GH, chair of the worship committee, reported that she had contacted eight retired clergy, who had indicated their willingness to help with services during the interregnum, and there were six others who might well be available.

The process of recruiting a new director of music had been activated. From the autumn onwards there was good hope of a full complement of four choral scholars, two of whom had indicated keenness to share in conducting the choir. GH expressed our gratitude to Guy Henshall for his work with the sound system, to Graham Willson for acting as organist, and to Rosie Bruce for her leadership in the conducting of choir rehearsals.

10 Fabric

DR reported the disintegration of the door to the heating chamber, and acceptance of a quotation (£900 + VAT) from *Morrish Engineering* for the installation of a galvanised steel opening gate in its place. There continued to be a problem of low level vandalism: security bars had been bent in order to allow access to dry areas that could be used for rough sleeping, and new preventative horizontal bars were needed to address this problem. Attempts at interesting the police in what has been happening had met with no success. It was suggested (i) that PCSO Eric Howells might be contacted, and (ii) that phoning 101, which experience elsewhere had found effective, might be tried.

11 Project management report

DR reported that there was no news of approval and the granting of a faculty by the Chancellor of the Diocese to enable us to accept firmly the tender from *Crowstep Building Services* for the reordering of St Peter's. Every possible effort had been made, including approaches to the Archdeacon and by the Diocesan Registrar, to achieve such a response, but so far without any success. Although the architect reports that *Crowstep* are keen to proceed, we are vulnerable to a possible increase in the tender now that the expiry date of 26 April has passed.

12 Finance

CS reported a favourable financial position for St Peter's, especially given the commitment of those who belong to the Parish Giving Scheme, so that for the period to 30 April income was only £511 below the budgeted figure while

expenditure registered underspending of some £5.9k, including the bill for tree trimming of £1.3k.

13 Dates of future meetings

These are 15 July (by zoom) and then (with confirmed bookings, at the Tiverton Hotel) 9 September, 11 November, 20 January, 17 March and 12 May. It was noted that there might well be a need for additional meetings (by zoom) as the process of appointing a new incumbent gathers momentum.

There being no further business, the meeting closed with prayer at 8.02 pm.

Signed:

Date: