

ST PETER'S, TIVERTON

Parochial Church Council

Minutes of the meeting held in church on Thursday 14 July 2022 at 7.30 pm

Present: Mary Seaton (in the chair), David Catchpole, Emma Down, Joanna Hall-Tomkin, Gill Heard, Jean Jenner, Averil Long, Sally Mundy, Jenny Palmer, Christopher Shields, Richard Stenlake and William Zarrett.

Apologies: Kate Henshall, Nickie Johnson and David Ricks

The meeting opened with prayer.

1 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 12 May 2022 were approved and signed. There were no matters arising from the minutes.

2 Co-option

It was agreed that John Brewster be co-opted to membership of the PCC and of the Finance Committee.

3 Safeguarding

JH-T confirmed that there were no new safeguarding matters to report.

4 Update on the interregnum

4.1 GH and WZ reported that life at St Peter's was continuing steadily and healthily, in no small measure thanks to the excellent ministry of the clergy who were coming to lead services and to preach. The quality of that ministry had been so high that the St Peter's community was being truly nourished.

4.2 The advertisement of the post of priest-in-charge had produced no more than two applications, and therefore there would be a further round of advertising.

Note: At the time of the meeting the timing of the second round of advertising remained uncertain, and it was agreed that WZ would consult with the Archdeacon without delay. Subsequently, i.e. the next day, the advertisement duly appeared in the *Church Times*, though mysteriously with TBA for each of the closing date for applications, the timing of the visit day, and the interview day. The Archdeacon later clarified that these were the responsibility of the Church Times, but he added that he had received six calls from people wishing to discuss the appointment. Subsequently he clarified the revised schedule, as follows:

Closing date for applications:	31 August
Shortlisting:	7 September (6.30 pm)

Visit date: 15 September
Interviews: 16 September (9.30 am)

5 Deanery Synod

MS introduced a summary of the last meeting of the Tiverton and Cullompton Deanery Synod on 30 June.

She drew particular attention to (i) the excellent achievement of the Deanery in paying 97% of the Common Fund contributions due to the Diocese; (ii) the strenuous efforts that had been made to give hospitality to refugees from Ukraine, a considerable number of whom had been welcomed by residents in the Cullompton area; and (iii) the wholehearted celebrations that had attended the Queen's platinum jubilee.

6 Worship

GH introduced the minutes of the meeting of the Worship Committee on 27 June.

6.1 *Director of Music:* An approach had been received from James Thomas, a well-qualified musician who was interested in the appointment. He had, however, subsequently made himself unavailable by virtue of his wife's achieving an appointment in the Midlands as a professional harpist. It was agreed that the process of advertising the post would be taken further.

6.2 *Use of the re-ordered church by external bodies.* Promising conversations had taken place with the head and deputy head of music at Blundell's, and these would be continued in hope and expectation of close collaboration between school and church (with neither side imposing charges on the other). The possibility of the Director of Music's being employed within the music department at Blundell's was also a discussable option. The idea of a celebratory concert to mark the completion of the re-ordering process would be mooted, perhaps for the weekend of 7-9 October, when the Bishop of Exeter would be presiding at the main Harvest Festival morning service.

It was noted that the post-covid membership of the East Devon Choral Society was significantly reduced, and it might well be that the Society's choral concerts would be more suitably located in a smaller venue, e.g. St Paul's church.

The PCC endorsed the minutes of the Worship Committee meeting.

7 Finance

CS reported on the financial situation at 30 June 2022 (cf. appendix I to these minutes).

In the first six months of the financial year income had been £24,379 (budget: £28,070). Expenditure had been £40,622 (budget: £46,331), mainly due to an underspend on planned and emergency maintenance. This produced an overall loss of £16,243 (budgeted loss: £18,261).

With regard to re-ordering, the church had been successful in claiming £46,869 of VAT paid back through the Listed Places of Worship scheme, with more still to come. This reinforced the expectation of completing the project within budget.

8 Fabric

DR's report on the fabric was as follows:

The reordering work has, to a large extent, taken over the efforts of the DIY Tuesday group, especially just recently with the switch from west end back to the east. With the completion of stone cutting it had been possible to remove the plastic protection from the pews and the organ and to start the 'big clean'. A large amount of unwanted clutter that had been gathered over the years in various cupboards and corners had been removed.

- 8.1 *Floodlighting*: The roof team has installed a further floodlight on the roof. This one is above the area of the organ and illuminates the north churchyard. It means we now have a total of six floodlights all controlled on one circuit, and we hope this will give sufficient anti-vandal cover, but we do have provision to extend the circuit with one further light if need be.
- 8.2 *Frontals chest*: A new lock has been installed on the frontals chest in the south east corner, the key to the previous lock having gone astray.
- 8.3 *Water penetration through the east wall of the south aisle*: With the help of Crowstep we have established that the cast iron rainwater hopper, at high level, has a split in its rear face, against the wall. This means the wall is becoming saturated, causing water penetration through the wall. Crowstep are establishing the best way to remedy the situation.

9 Reordering

DR's report on reordering ran as follows:

- 9.1 *Progress at the east end*: The works at the east end are now virtually complete. Our first service there will be on Sunday 17 July. The 'big clean' is well under way, but it will take much effort to get the church back to its previous state and may require some professional help for the higher levels. This will be reviewed when all the works are complete.

Our first post-reordering wedding is booked for Saturday 23 July.

- 9.2 *New chairs*: We take delivery of our new chairs on Tuesday 19 July.
- 9.3 *Other areas*: The rest of the works, with the exception of the library, are making good progress, with the servery area taking shape and finishing works within the toilets making steady progress. The external walls of the toilet block have reached parapet level and DR would recommend a visit around the back of the church to admire the workmanship achieved to the external walls.

- 9.4.1 *The Newte Library*: The late decision to introduce a mezzanine floor in the library has caused this area to be in delay. It will be treated as a separate phase of the project, able to be self-contained and not impinge on the rest of the church.

The investigation works undertaken below floor level have exposed made up ground. This is unsuitable for the foundations we would need for a steel frame to support the new mezzanine floor without expensive piling. However, the investigations also revealed masonry ledges to the existing foundations and the proposal is now to install a precast concrete floor supported by these ledges, with the construction of the mezzanine floor level entirely in timber supported on the concrete floor. This should be cost effective, as it will omit both the foundations and the steel frame.

The structural engineer is completing a revised design for the mezzanine level which will allow the contractor to confirm his revised costing for the revised scope of works. We will also be able to apply for the necessary approvals to proceed with this revised scheme.

- 9.4.2 *Funding received for the library rehousing and painting restoration, with dates of the grants*. ED reported the details [subsequently updated] of grant money so far received, totalling £18,291, as follows.

15 October 2021: Church Buildings Council grants of £1,198 and £200 for two condition reports, one on the library and one on the paintings respectively. The first grant covered the whole library report and the second grant covered half the cost of the painting report.

17 March 2022: Church Buildings Council grant of £3,000 towards the restoration of the paintings. This covered the restoration of the portrait of William Laud.

27 May 2022: Idlewild Trust grant of £4,250 towards the restoration of the paintings. This covered the restoration of the portraits of James Graham and Thomas Wentworth.

20 July 2022: Church Buildings Council grant of £9,643 towards the rehousing of the library.

There are still some additional funds to be raised for the painting restoration of the portrait of John Newte and the rehousing of the Clerical Lending Library (the books bequeathed to the library after Newte's death) which ED hopes to fund with a Heritage Lottery Fund grant. This will also include funding to create educational resources for the library and a programme to increase use of the library by a wider audience.

The PCC recorded its deep gratitude to DR and ED for all the work they had done to achieve the outstanding outcomes which were becoming visible to us all.

10 Any other business

- 10.1 *Dates of future meetings*: The next APCM will take place on 20 April 2023. A *Coffee on the Road* session, open to all, will take place on Wednesday 14 September at 10 am.

Theology Quest and Questions in Tiverton will resume in the autumn, with meetings held during BST but not GMT: Thursdays 15, 22, 29 September for studies of the Mayflower community, and 13, 20 and 27 October for consideration of the topic 'How did Jesus become God?'

- 10.2 *The publicity and public use group*: This group had been set up at the PCC meeting on 20 January 2022 (cf. minute 7.5), and had proved to be a forum for the ventilation of many creative ideas. MS urged, and the PCC agreed, that the work of the group should now be taken forward in the following way: (i) When any new idea is put forward and considered, there should also be a clear and careful decision about who would take responsibility for implementing that idea. (ii) A reference book, digital or otherwise, should be kept by a designated person, an events coordinator, recording when events would be held and what sort of events they would be: it was particularly important that after consultation with the wardens the guidelines for use of the church should be clarified. This events coordinator needs to be a local person, i.e. this is not a task which can be assigned to the parish administrator. (iii) For events held in church there should be a standard form setting out all relevant guidelines and requirements.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.20 pm.

Signed:

Date:

Dates of future meetings: 8 September, 10 November, 19 January, 16 March, 11 May