

ST PETER'S, TIVERTON

Parochial Church Council

Minutes of the meeting held at the Tiverton Hotel
on Thursday 19 January 2023 at 7.30 pm

Present: Gill Heard (in the chair), John Brewster, David Catchpole, Emma Cobbledick, Joanna Hall-Tomkin, Kate Henshall, Jean Jenner, Nickie Johnson, Averil Long, Sally Mundy, Jenny Palmer, David Ricks, Christopher Shields, Richard Stenlake and William Zarrett.

Apologies: Mary Seaton

The meeting opened with a prayer.

1 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 10 November 2022 were approved and signed. There were no matters arising from the minutes.

2 Safeguarding

JH-T addressed the question of PCC members and DBS checks. She reminded everyone of the diocesan recommendation is that all PCC members should have a current DBS, and went on to observe that such checks have come to be considered quite normal in many walks of life. There would be advantage in a voluntary undertaking of such checks by all PCC members. Situations might arise unexpectedly in which compassionate action might be needed in helping children or vulnerable adults, and for such action to be possible DBS certificates for personnel involved would be necessary.

She undertook to discuss matters with PCC members individually. And she would be keeping a precise record of dates of DBS checks and diocesan safeguarding courses for all PCC members.

3 Finance

CS and WZ briefed the PCC on current financial issues:

- 3.1 *The position on 30 November 2022:* For the period concerned the net income minus expenditure figure was £50,567 - £73,699, i.e. minus £23,132, and the net budget figure for income minus expenditure was a deficit of £94,941 - £51,462, i.e. minus £43,479. So overall our position was £43,479 minus £23,132 better than we expected, i.e. £20,347 better. As a general comment on these figures, income held up well throughout 2022, and expenses have been underspent due to our not having a Director of Music and maintenance being reduced by our having builders on site.

Work continues on the production of the end-of-year accounts, and the final results will be distributed to the PCC with commentary within a few weeks.

- 3.2 *Budget working group recommendations:* A draft budget for 2023 had been produced by the working group (cf. appendix to these minutes), which the PCC was happy to adopt *nem con*.
- 3.3 *Local fee schedule:* The PCC also adopted *nem con* the following schedule of fees. These are in addition to the fees set by the Church of England (Statutory Fees), a portion of which is payable to the Diocese. So St Peter's sets the following fees locally for services requiring the participation of those listed:

- Verger	(currently £25)	£30
- Sound Technician (new)		£30
- Organist	(currently £70)	£80
- Choir	(currently £95)	£105
- Bells	(currently £120)	£140
- Heating	(currently £50)	£80

4 Vacancy/interregnum

GH and WZ reported to the PCC on the outcome of the process of interviewing the sole person shortlisted from among applicants for the post of priest in charge of St Peter's with St Thomas' Chevithorne and Cove, and also St Andrew's. An appointment had been made and it was planned to announce in all the churches on Sunday 22 January that the offer of the post had been accepted [by the Revd Christian Hill, currently assistant priest at Holy Trinity Salcombe].

5 Worship

GH introduced the minutes of the meeting of the Worship Committee on 5 January, drawing particular attention to the following items.

- 5.1 *Altar table:* Consideration is being given to the purchase of a readily movable nave altar table that will be larger than the small one that is currently in use. It was agreed that the high altar would be used on festival days like Easter Sunday.
- 5.2 *Cushions:* The provision of comfortable cushions in otherwise uncomfortable pews was much in mind, and detailed measurements and estimates were being arranged. It was likely that the cushions would be ruby in colouring and would thus harmonise well with the carpeting in the church. Funds were available from the church's general reserves, supplemented by resources acquired through such enterprises as *From Seedtime to Harvest*, an initiative pursued enthusiastically by the late Roy Webber.
- 5.3 *Home Communion visits:* JJ reported on continuing conversations with the staff of the care homes which she, Sue Beale and Helen Fensome visited.
- 5.4 *Taizé service:* In response to the request for another service of this sort GH reported that it was hoped to arrange one towards the end of February.

- 5.5 *Thanks:* The PCC identified itself gratefully with the Worship Committee's vote of thanks to Sally Mundy for all the work she has been doing in the life of St Peter's.

The PCC endorsed the minutes of the Worship Committee meeting.

6 Fabric

DR reported on the following fabric-related issues.

- 6.1 *Fire risk assessment:* We were visited and inspected by Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service on 20 December 2022, and their findings were published just before Christmas. They noted seventeen items requiring our attention, which can be broken down as follows.

8 items require us to obtain specialist advice prior to putting works in hand. These include fire protection works at the base of the tower to protect the bell ringers' route of escape, fire risk from the organ, improvements to fire extinguisher provision and the provision of illuminated fire exit signage to the exit doors.

5 items fall under the heading of management and training, so that those responsible are in a position to ensure safe escape when the church is being used.

2 housekeeping items can be undertaken by our Tuesday DIY team, and 2 items require no further action.

We are seeking a suitable adviser to cover works to be done and also to provide training. Now that we are promoting the use of the church as a concert venue and for other gatherings we have a responsibility to ensure that it is being used safely and without risk to visitors. We have about six months to show that we are taking these requirements seriously, and we hope to have them all signed off by then. We would like to record our thanks to Mark Heritage, who has been helping us with Fire Risk Assessment documents for many years. It is fair to say that he has been pointing out several of the Brigade's concerns, especially management and training, for some time.

- 6.2 *Heating:* Our heating maintenance contractors have returned to site in response to a request that the performance of the heating system be improved. They have increased the gas flow to the burner and this has increased the input temperature of the air into the church. Some benefit has been observed. They tell us the equipment is now running at its maximum capacity, though WZ observed that this claim is open to question and he undertook to follow up this matter.
- 6.3 *The clock:* Our clock suffered a malfunction about two weeks ago causing the chimes to lose synchronisation. When our clock maintenance company attended on site, the fault proved to be a loose wing nut on the time adjustment mechanism. An annual service was also completed at the same time to save a return visit.

7 Reordering

DR updated the PCC on recent developments.

- 7.1 *Servery and toilets:* Minor snags are being addressed at a rather slow but steady rate. The contractor believes he has established the cause of the water ingress at high level from the roof, and remedial works are planned for next week.
- 7.2 *The porch area:* The porch is complete with the exception of locks and the finishing off of the ceiling and the lighting. The hope must be that all will agree that the introduction of glazing has transformed the appearance and experience. The pews adjacent to the porch will be installed next week.

A date for the provision of the children's area remains unknown.

- 7.3 *The Meeting Room and Library:* Since the last PCC meeting we have received an acceptable quotation of £41,250 from Crowstep for the library works. This is within our estimate as laid down at the last PCC meeting (10 November 2022, item 7.3). but the figure might change slightly with the request for an itemised schedule of works and a breakdown of costs.

Crowstep have been instructed that we wish to proceed with the work as soon as we have the necessary permissions in place.

We received formal DAC approval to our library proposals on 17 January, and an application has been made for a Faculty. The required public notice was posted on 18 January, and this has to remain in place for a period of 30 days. We then request determination by the Chancellor and wait for his formal issue of a Faculty document. Bearing in mind that this process took 13 weeks for the main works, thereby causing much frustration, we can only hope it will be quicker this time. Last time DR had been driven to contact the Bishop of Exeter in order to achieve a response from the Chancellor, and the Bishop's PA had taken the necessary steps. If the same course of action again proves necessary, DR promised that it would indeed happen.

In discussion, WZ observed that Crowstep had been hindered by their involvement in other work and by the structural engineer's delay in producing design plans. It would be prudent to proceed as rapidly as possible with the laying of the floor, bearing in mind that grant-awarding bodies required action without delay. This same point was underlined forcefully by EC, who had negotiated the awards (cf. PCC 14jul22 minute 9.4.2), and who suggested that the reordering groups should once again meet regularly in order to exert the necessary pressure on Crowstep.

8 Installation of a defibrillator

This had been considered by the PCC at an earlier stage, and the advice then had been that such an installation might make St Peter's liable for insurance claims. A recent incident in church, which happily had not proved fatal, had revived the question. It was necessary to ask now whether the St Peter's liability in such a situation would be all the greater if we had *not* installed a defibrillator. The matter was examined from several angles, the outcome being an agreement *nem con* that a defibrillator (probable cost ca. £1.2k) should be purchased and installed, and that training concerning its use should be provided for sidespersons. WZ will pursue this matter.

9 APCM 2023 and elections to Deanery Synod and PCC

- 9.1 *Date of APCM:* It was noted that attendance at the APCM had been declining in recent years. In an effort to encourage greater attendance and therefore wider participation in the development of policy in St Peter's, the date would be changed to Sunday 23 April, and a bring-and-share lunch would follow the main morning service and precede the APCM.
- 9.2 DC introduced a paper setting out the details of elections to both Deanery Synod and PCC. There would need to be 3 persons elected to represent St Peter's on the Tiverton and Cullompton Deanery Synod; the number of persons to be elected to the PCC was contingent on a number of factors, which were set out in the paper. The PCC agreed that it would be prudent to plan ahead in good time concerning nominations for these places, and DC undertook to circulate the relevant forms to all members with these minutes.
- 10 Any other business
- 10.1 *CHAT:* It was agreed that the box for donations of goods and contributions to CHAT should be reinstated.
- 10.2 *Bibles in pews:* JJ requested that the Bibles should once again be placed in the pews now that the building work in the church was virtually complete.
- 10.3 *A rail for the lectern steps:* the difficulty some members have in climbing up and down when reading from the lectern had brought the possibility of introducing a handrail to mind. DR and WZ said they would look into it.
- 10.4 *Appreciation for visiting clergy:* the debt we owe to the clergy who have regularly covered services during the interregnum raised the question of whether some token of appreciation might be given to them. WZ responded that this had already been done and had taken the form of a token for use at *The Jolly Vintner*.
- 10.5 *Licensing service for the new incumbent:* This is likely to take place either in late April or early May, the precise date being dependent on the Bishop's diary.
- 10.6 *Cleaning:* the need for a thorough cleaning of the church after all the building work was agreed. Special arrangements would be needed for cleaning at the higher levels of the building, but the lower levels could be covered by volunteers.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.45 pm.

Signed:

Date: