

PCC MINUTES FOR THE PARISH OF ST MICHAEL'S PLAS NEWTON, CHESTER

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 21st October 2021 via Zoom

Present	Peter Rugen (Chair)	Martin Smith
	David Blackmore	Ali Gibbons
	John Allan	Rob Kophamel
	Steve Powell	Fiona Prichard (Secretary)
	Steve McKew	
	Ruth McKew	
	Peter Caldwell	
	Peter Webster	
	Phil Roberts	
	Anne Stockdale	Apologies
	John Stockdale	Magdy Fahmy
	Stu Davies	
	Anne de Reybekill	
	Andrew Evans	

Ref	Item	Notes	Action (what)	Who and by when
	Welcome and Prayer	Pete welcomed everyone and thanked them for making the time to come to the meeting. He opened the meeting with a reading from Psalm 1 and by saying a prayer.		
	Minutes from September PCC Meeting	Pete asked members of the meeting if there were any amendments required to the minutes for September. A query was raised as to whether all the actions proposed at the meeting had been noted and followed up. A member of the PCC who also stands on the Mission Committee confirmed that the Mission Committee had met following the joint meeting and all outstanding matters had been acted upon. No revisions were requested and so approval of the minutes was proposed by Peter Caldwell and seconded by Andrew Evans. The minutes were approved by all present.		
	Matters Arising	<p>Doors – Steve P said that the following quotes had been received:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £3,500 for both doors to be replaced with PVC doors; • £5,200 for both doors to be replaced with painted and finished hardwood doors; • £4,635 for both doors to be replaced with hardwood doors which would require painting and finishing. <p>A discussion ensued regarding whether it was best to go with PVC or hardwood doors. The aesthetic look of PVC doors was queried and it was suggested that PVC was less eco friendly</p>		



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		<p>than hardwood doors. It was questioned whether one of the doors could be repaired although the fire door was thought to be beyond repair. It was queried whether further quotes should be sought but, in the end, Pete proposed that both doors would be replaced by PVC doors and there was a consensus of approval.</p> <p>Garden Maintenance – Pete explained that this was a matter arising from the July PCC Meeting.</p> <p>A copy of Les Ellison’s letter of resignation had been circulated prior to the meeting. In the letter Les, who was resigning from the role of Garden Coordinator at the end of January, had suggested the role became a paid part-time role with an agreed job description. Pete said that Les had a good feel for what was required and that his views should be respected. A discussion ensued and the following opinions were expressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We needed to decide whether paying for the garden fitted in with our vision (ie how important is the garden to the church’s mission); • It was suggested that the garden was of huge importance and had been of great benefit during the Covid crisis; • The garden had always been used a lot and been an important part of the church; • The garden is a crucial part of our mission even though this had not been articulated (except in the staff team); • It is important to the non-church groups who use the garden (eg Scouts, Buzz Group); • A member of the PCC said that they were astounded that we would have to pay someone as it had never been a paid role but it was argued that there was no difference from paying someone to clean the church and that the changing nature of churches meant that fewer people were volunteering; • A member said that they had tried to volunteer to help with the garden maintenance but their offer had not been taken up. However, Pete said he believed this was due to Covid and having to keep teams small; 	Quote for PVC doors to be followed up and doors replaced	Steve P/ Andy T



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It should be investigated whether someone would be willing to take the role of garden co-ordinator on as a volunteer. <p>The discussion concluded with the proposal that, in the first instance, a notice would be put on the next and subsequent notice sheets asking if there was someone who would agree to take on the role on a voluntary basis. Pete asked that PCC members also pray about the matter. All were agreed.</p>		
2104	Finance Report	<p>The Finance Report had been circulated prior to the meeting. Phil went through the 7 points listed at the start of his report which required PCC approval:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Energy renewal – Phil explained that he had received a new gas and electricity contract and the increase was 9% which he did not think was too bad in the light of general energy increases. He wanted to know if the PCC were happy for the church to stay with Parish Buying. A member of the PCC queried whether this meant the contract would remain with Total Gas and Power as one of the smart meters had consistently failed to work since its installation. Phil confirmed that the contract would remain with Total Gas and Power and advised that Parish Buying should be approached to help sort the problem. All present agreed that the church stay with Parish Buying. Insurance Renewal – Phil proposed continuing with Trinitas this year for the insurance on the church, café and church properties. All present agreed. Funds – All present agreed to Phil’s proposal to close the Youth Worker Fund and the Kings Way Fund and to set up a Youth Worker Camp Fund. Envelope Scheme – Phil explained that very few people use the envelope scheme and he was proposing to scrap the existing numbered envelopes, stop recording the individual gifts and switch to plain white envelopes which would be cheaper. An objection was raised that this would only save £50 and could cost £50 if someone was unable to continue to give via this method. Phil said that plain envelopes could be issued to anyone who wished to continue giving in this way and any gift which was 	<p>Energy contract to be signed</p> <p>Insurance Contracts to be signed</p> <p>Funds to be closed & YWF Fund to be set up</p>	<p>Phil</p> <p>Phil</p> <p>Phil</p>



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		<p>eligible for Gift Aid would continue to be recorded. All present agreed.</p> <p>5. Grants – Phil explained that the church has received nearly £15k in grants this year. Phil proposed that the congregation be approached and a volunteer sought who could take over the role of applying for grants. A discussion ensued. It was suggested that there could be difficulties finding and training someone. The view was expressed that it was part of a person’s job to apply for grants and that they were likely to be the best person to apply for a grant as they knew what it was needed for. The outcome of the discussion was that the current system should continue (whereby application of grants was carried out by those who required them) but that support should be offered. It was also agreed that a central repository was needed so that grants could be stored and the generic details copied onto future grants.</p> <p>6. Latest Estimate 2021- Phil said that, again the year had not been as bad financially as forecast and, at the moment, it looked as if there would be a £7k deficit. The reason that this deficit was not larger was due partly to the fact that little work had been done to the building, the roles of cleaner and rental coordinator had been combined and reduced café costs (as grants had been received). Phil cautioned that it might be a very different picture next year. He also said that he was concerned as income was only 2% higher than it was in 2019 as people had not reviewed their giving. A member of the PCC suggested that one reason for this might be because, owing to Covid, there had not been a formal request to the congregation this year to increase their giving. Another reason suggested was that the church had not set out its vision and had large reserves which did not encourage people to increase their giving. It was further suggested that we needed to think about our vision so that we could inspire generosity within the church family.</p> <p>7. Proposed Budget 2022 – Phil explained that he wanted to approach the congregation regarding their</p>	<p>Swap to plain envelopes</p> <p>Sas to be given support</p> <p>Need to think about our vision</p>	<p>Phil</p> <p>Andrew E</p> <p>PCC</p>



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		<p>giving earlier than usual and so asked that the budget be approved at the next PCC meeting. He added that we needed to decide whether to budget on what we were receiving or what we wanted to do and then decide how much of our reserves we want to use. Phil was asked about the reduction of the Mission budget and Phil explained that this was due to CSCW being moved to the Youth budget, as agreed at the previous meeting. A discussion ensued about the reduction in percentage from 10% to 8% (because of this move) and it was explained that no less money was being spent but it was just being allocated differently in the budget; in actual fact, the percentage of giving was 16% overall. Several members of the PCC expressed their concern about the reduced percentage to Mission but other members felt that, as this had been agreed at the previous meeting following much discussion, it should not be reversed. Pete proposed that the budget (which would halve the reserves) be accepted but it was felt by several members that more time was needed to consider it before approval was granted. A request was made that the budget was split into essential items and those which were favoured but not essential. It was agreed that the budget would be approved at the next PCC meeting and that, in the meantime, Phil would produce a document showing the essential and non-essential budget items. Phil also said he would welcome any queries regarding the budget via email.</p> <p>Pete thanked Phil for his report.</p>	<p>Document showing essential and non-essential budget items to be produced</p>	<p>Phil</p>
2105	Building Group	<p>A discussion document had been circulated prior to the meeting. Ruth joined the meeting and confirmed that, as set out in the report, the Building Group had met and decided on the purpose of the group, the outcomes they wished to achieve and a list of potential projects with a loose guide to costs. Ruth said she would like the PCC to consider the list of priority projects which were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Toilets 2. Creating space for children and young people 3. Outdoor shelter 		



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		<p>4. Chairs</p> <p>There was general agreement that the report was extremely good and Ruth was thanked for her work on it. A discussion followed regarding the different projects and some of the views expressed were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of chairs was queried (ie was it enough?) but it was suggested that more could be purchased if needed (chairs were £100 each); • It was also queried whether we needed to replace the chairs; • It was suggested that electric radiators would be a cheaper alternative to a heat pump and would still be eco-friendly. However, it was pointed out that there was not enough supply at present; • It was queried whether solar panels would lead to a drop in consumption and it was confirmed that it would. Solar panels would also generate some extra energy although this would not make a huge amount; • The configuration of the toilets was queried and Ruth explained that they could be configured in different ways with separate cubicles (with sinks); • A member asked for a more specific idea of costs but Ruth said that it was not possible at this stage. The intention was to prioritise the projects and then proceed to costing them; • We needed to work out what God wants us to do. <p>The discussion drew to a close and Pete proposed that the Building Group's proposal to prioritise the toilets, creation of space for children and young people, providing an outdoor shelter and replacing the chairs be accepted and those projects be taken to the next stage.</p> <p>Pete thanked Ruth and the rest of the Group for all their work.</p>		
2106	Church Suite	<p>Rob K joined the meeting and gave a brief update on Church Suite. He said Church Suite was used for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administration - the calendar links were regularly updated to the website and all church events and stream groups were on it (Tom Leathers is responsible for updating information); 		



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rotas - Ken Ball has put all the rotas on Church Suite. Owen Newton is looking into organising the coffee rota through Church Suite; • Bookings and Rentals – Jenny is doing these on Church Suite; • Church giving. A few people have given through Church Suite; • Forms (eg GDPR and Gift Aid). Forms can be filled out and submitted on Church Suite. Consent forms for Children and Youth events can also be administrated using Church Suite; • Address Book – used for communication. <p>Rob went on to say that at present there are 91 church members signed up to Church Suite and this would keep on developing. Another push was needed to encourage more people to sign up. There have been some minor hiccups but these are being ironed out.</p> <p>A member of the PCC asked how accessible the diary is on line. Rob explained that on the website there are 3 buttons and the first is the church calendar.</p> <p>A request was made for a “Church Suite for Dummies” document or video to be produced. Rob said he would come up with something.</p> <p>It was suggested that the PCC should be on Church Suite and that people need to be pushed into using it.</p> <p>Pete thanked Rob for all his report and Rob left the meeting.</p>	<p>“How to Use” help to be provided</p>	Rob
2107	Deanery Synod	<p>Prior to the meeting, John Stockdale had circulated a report of a meeting of the Deanery Synod which had taken place on 18th October. John explained that at the meeting a presentation on Living in Love and Faith had been given by Rev Nicola Eastwood of St Mary, Upton, Wirral. This topic would be discussed by the St Michael’s church family after half term. John said that we needed to discern what the spirit is saying to us and that we should be willing to learn. He said it was important to use the pastoral principles as set out in his report in order to move to a position of trust. Feedback from those representatives where the topic had already been discussed had been diverse with</p>		



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		<p>people in some parishes willing to listen and learn whilst in others the discussion had created divisions.</p> <p>Pete thanked John for his report.</p>		
2108	Safeguarding	<p>Pete said he would like a safeguarding item to be on the agenda of each PCC meeting to keep it upper most in our minds.</p> <p>Anne gave a report on safe guarding within St Michael's and said the following was important to note:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That any group leaders notify Anne of any new volunteers so that it could be determined whether a DBS is required; 2. That references were also required for volunteers; 3. That all DBS have been renewed; 4. Ali Gibbons acts as Anne's deputy; 5. Pauline Butterfield now has a deputy, Sean Augustin so administration has improved and CCPAS is now called Thirty-One Eight. 6. Bishop Julie was the main lead on safeguarding in the parish. <p>Anne said that she would send her report to Fiona for circulation to PCC members.</p> <p>Pete thanked Anne for her report.</p>	Report to be circulated	AS/FP
2109	Choice of Christmas Charity	<p>Pete reminded everyone that last year the decision had been made to stop supporting the Operation Christmas Child charity. Pete asked members of the meeting if there was a consensus to support another specific charity. A discussion followed with the following points raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It would be a good thing as there were lots of worthy causes; • It would be good to involve children; • Teams4u was suggested. Pete said that Ruth Richards in the café was in favour of supporting Teams4u through the café and we could join that campaign; • Concerns were raised about the types of goods (eg plastic and not good quality) being taken into other countries if a shoe box type project was supported; 		



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was suggested that we could choose a different charity each year; Another suggestion was that we could support the local Food Bank especially in the light of the News item that day which had reported on the increased need for Food Banks; Pete was asked if the congregation were aware that the shoe box charity was not being supported this year. Pete said he would ensure that they did. <p>The discussion closed and Pete said that he would make a decision on the choice of charity for this year. He invited emails if anyone had any other suggestions.</p>	<p>Congregation to be advised that no shoe boxes will be collected this year.</p> <p>New charity to be chosen</p>	<p>Pete</p> <p>Pete</p>
2110	Vicar's Slot	<p>Pete said asked everyone to note the following dates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8th December – Carol Singing at Kings Way Café. He added that the church, together with the Hub, are looking at whether it would be possible to have some stalls; 6th December – The Arch Deacon's visit (which might involve one of the Wardens); 26th December – The Bishop suggested at the Rural Dean's meeting that it was not compulsory to have a service on this Sunday so Pete has decided not to have one. 		
2111	AOB	There was no other business.		
	Prayer	Pete thanked everyone for their contributions and the meeting closed with saying the Grace.		
	Next Meeting	PCC Meeting on Monday, 15 th November 2021 at 8.00 pm.		

