

**MEETING OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL
OF ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST, EAST DULWICH**

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 21 June 2016

Present: Rachel Mills (Lay Chair), Christine Camplin, Anne Clarke, Anne Coates, Libby Coates, Alan Croft, Natasha D'Souza, Sarah Goudge, Sally Gross, Martin Howell, Ben Hunt, Malcolm King, Alastair McCulloch, Gill Nash, James Nurton, Alistair Read, Michael Robinson, Eurica Shaw, Vince Turner, and Julie Whitney..

In attendance: Clare Brown (for Item 4.1) and Dorothy Oxley (PCC Secretary, Minutes)

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Ola Jibona, Tayo Olatunde, and Joy Taylor

2. Welcome and opening prayer

Rachel welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially Clare Brown, who would be speaking on item 4.1, the transfer of archival material. Alistair McCulloch then led the meeting in prayer.

3. Minutes of the PCC meeting held on 21 April 2016

Following circulation of the Minutes, some members had notified Dorothy of errors which had now been corrected, and the Minutes were approved and signed as a true record.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

4.1 Transfer of archival materials:

4.1.1 Clare explained that she had taken over the role of Church Archivist from Maureen in December 2015, and she commended Maureen on the excellent work which she had done. However, she was concerned that the church has in its possession material going back as far as 1829, but cannot provide adequate storage for this in conditions which will extend its life and also allow it to be accessed by people who want to explore these historic documents. She recommended therefore that the church should deposit much of this older material in the London Metropolitan Archives (LMA), which already stored registers for the Diocesan Registry. The material would remain owned by the church, could be recalled at any time. The Archives provided a first class professional service, including secure storage, cataloguing to international standards, a reprographic service, and facilities for the material to be viewed in controlled conditions. There would be no charge for these services.

4.1.2 Questions were invited, and the following were raised:

Q: How much material is involved, and where is it now?

A: Papers are stored in a very full cupboard in the Minstrel's Gallery; the aim would be to send any material over 100 years old to the LMA. The PCC might also like to consider depositing more recent material (say, up unto the 1950s/1960s, in order to clear space and allow remaining material to be reordered for easier access.

Q: Will the LMA provide an itemised list so everyone knows what is there?

A: It would be good to have a page on the St John's website dealing with Parish history, which could either list the archival materials or point people to a hyperlink to the LMA's catalogue.

Q: Is it just paper materials that will be transferred? What about things like the silver shovels for the garden?

A: It will be papers, though the LMA also have equipment which can digitalise material, and can transfer materials from videos and tapes which would otherwise decay.

Q: What about the very detailed exhibition put together by Maureen?

A: This is still up there, and if anyone wanted to do something like that again, they could easily get access to materials held at the LMA. They have a public search room which is very easy to use, with helpful and friendly staff. You can also take a camera to photograph materials, if you wish.

Christine suggested that copies of key documents could also be made in advance of them being transferred, and once the items were catalogued, it would be easy to do a search on line.

Q: Where are the London Metropolitan Archives?

A: In Farringdon, very near the 63 bus route.

4.1.3 Christine Camplin proposed, and Alistair McCulloch seconded, transfer of older archival materials to the LMA. This was **agreed** unanimously.

4.1.4 The PCC thanked Clare for coming and for the work she was doing. Clare explained that the transfer of materials would not happen immediately, but when items were ready for transfer, the LMA would arrange collection. She then left the meeting.

4.2 **Parish Away Day/Pilgrimage to Winchester:** Eurica confirmed that all the arrangements for the trip on Saturday, 25 June were in place and 20+ people had booked to go, 10 – 12 of whom were from St John's, the others from other C of E and Baptist churches. On behalf of the PCC, Rachel thanked Eurica for organising this and hoped everyone had a lovely day. Eurica would report back on the trip to the next PCC meeting.

Action: Eurica Shaw

4.3 **Sound system:** Rachel reported that the sound system team had met; more people have now joined the rota, and they would be getting some new microphones. Anne Clark reported that Victor and Emmanuel Jibona were both showing interest in learning to operate the system, but the Safeguarding team would first need to check the regulations about whether they had to be supervised by adults who hold DBS clearance as the boys were aged 12 and 14.

Action: Safeguarding Team

4.4 **Catering for St Martin's Singers:** The singers had requested some refreshments between their rehearsal and the evening performance in the church on 12 November. There would be around 30 of them and they would be quite happy with whatever could be provided – e.g. a ploughman's or cold buffet/sandwiches, tea and coffee, not necessarily hot food. John Webber had already asked Eurica Shaw if she could organise this and Dorothy was happy to help.

Action: Eurica Shaw, Dorothy Oxley (and any other volunteers welcome!)

4.5 **Children's Society representative:** Nobody had yet volunteered. Alistair Read, who had filled this role previously, explained that at most, the representatives met four times a year – only twice in the previous year. He would email information about what the role involved to members of the PCC.

Action: Alistair Read

4.6 **Response to Bishop Michael:** The response sent by Dorothy on behalf of the PCC, which incorporating amendments made by some PCC members, had been circulated, as had Bishop Michael's email response. This matter is now closed.

4.7 **Summer Event:** Libby explained that there would be just a couple of popular stalls plus the

barbecue, Pimms tent/bar, cakes and possibly other refreshments in the kitchen, raffle, bottle tombola and activities for the children (which would be free, except perhaps there might be a small charge for something like face painting). She asked PCC members if they could contribute a cake or a bottle, and help on the day (Sunday, 3 July). Various people had already volunteered but there were still a few gaps and it would be good to have additional helpers to relieve stallholders so they too had some time to just enjoy the event. Volunteers would also be needed on the gate – members of the public were welcome and there would be no charge, and those on 'gate duty' would mainly be helping to keep small children safe. Libby would circulate a list of stalls and activities with details of existing volunteers and gaps to be filled.

Action: Libby Coates

- 4.8 **Role of Parish Administrator:** The small working group had met and amended the job description, but now wanted to get Gill O'Neill's input to ensure this matched with what she wants. They will then bring this back to the PCC. The suggested salary is £12 per hour. Once the job description is approved, the post will be advertised, with a view to appointing someone to start in September. Anne Coates asked Rachel to thank Gareth for all he has been doing in the interim, and Rachel confirmed that Gareth is willing to continue until the new Parish Administrator is appointed.

Action: Working Group, Rachel Mills

- 4.9 **Recruitment of more crèche volunteers:** Libby explained that this is an ongoing issue. She and Gareth had discussed five people and he is going to follow these up. A couple of people who had been approached could not lead the crèche because they had children under the age of 2 who they would want to bring with them, and the safeguarding rules do not allow anyone to be responsible for other people's children while also looking after their own under-2s. Libby would like to recruit some male volunteers, and it would also be nice to have some adults without young children. Anne Clarke explained that anyone who held an up to date DBS check could offer to help on an ad hoc basis if extra support was needed. Natasha asked if it might be possible to do a 'trial' session, shadowing two experienced leaders, and Ben confirmed this was done in Sunday School and had worked well. Julie suggested that people might in any case be invited to 'sit in' at creche or Sunday School to see how these worked, but Libby said this would need to be by invitation only and subject to approval by the Safeguarding team, as there were sometimes confidential safeguarding issues of which only they were aware.
- 4.10 **Planning a strategy for the future recruitment of a Youth Worker:** Julie and Catherine Lyon would be discussing this with Gill once she was in post, and Julie said anyone else in the PCC who was interested would be welcome to be involved.

5. Minutes of the Standing Committee meeting held on 24 May 2016

The Minutes had been circulated to the PCC and a small typographical error was corrected in item 10.1.

6. Matters Arising from the Standing Committee Minutes

- 6.1 **8.00 am Mass:** Anne Clarke reported that individuals attending were acting as sidespeople when needed and all was going well.
- 6.2 **Proposed separation of Standing Committee and Staff Team:**
- 6.2.1 Rachel explained that these two Committees had been combined into one to help Bill Jacob, so he only had to attend a single meeting, but they actually worked much better as two separate committees, as many items were not relevant to members of both groups. She therefore proposed that they should revert to being two separate Committees, and had amended the Terms of Reference (circulated) accordingly. Gill O'Neill was also in favour of doing this and it was usual practice. She also proposed (as set out in the Terms) that there should be two representatives of the PCC, in addition to the Churchwardens and Treasurer,

on the Standing Committee, as had originally been the case. Ben suggested that having two groups would also help Gill to acquaint herself with the day to day life of the Parish.

- 6.2.2 One of the problems with combining the two groups was that the Staff Team discussed pastoral issues and it was not appropriate for these to form part of the Standing Committee's discussions, especially as copies of those Minutes went to the PCC. Dorothy assured members that no such items were minuted. Julie asked if people were asked for their consent that their pastoral needs should be discussed, and Anne Clarke gave assurances that individual needs discussed in confidence with a priest or pastoral carer were never discussed at these meetings, which only touched upon broader issues such as whether anyone had seen a member of the congregation who had not been to church for some time. Ben suggested that people would still feel more comfortable if such issues were raised only within the confidentiality of the Staff Team.
- 6.2.3 Rachel Mills proposed, and Ben Hunt seconded, that the Committees should be separate, and this was **agreed**. The Terms of Reference were approved with a small correction ('him' to 'her' when referring to the Vicar). *(Note: The two PCC members will be elected at the July meeting.)*
- 6.3 **Appointment of new Pastoral Carers:** Anne Clarke reported that this had been discussed at the Pastoral Carers' meeting two days previously, and would be further discussed with Gill O'Neill when she took up her post.
- 6.4 **Removal of names of those who had not been in church for some time from rotas:** Anne Coates explained that there were some people on the rotas for readers, prayer leaders etc who had been missing on several occasions, and Anne Clarke asked to be reminded who these individuals were so she could check the new rotas.

Action: Anne Clarke, Anne Coates

7. Arrangements for new Vicar

- 7.1 **Alterations and repairs to the vicarage:** Work was under way now but had started late and was well behind schedule. The bathroom and kitchen needed to be replaced/renovated, windows whose frames had rotted needed to be replaced, and general renovation and redecoration needed to take place. Planning permission and building control were all under the remit of the Diocese and the Churchwardens were pushing them for faster completion. The current aim was for Gill to be able to move in during the first or second week of July though there was some concern that this might not be achievable.
- 7.2 **Induction service on 19 July:** This was moving ahead, with Rachel and Joy meeting with Susan Height (the new Area Dean) to go through the details. There would be a rehearsal for the key people involved. The service would not start until 8.00 p.m., which was later than preferred, so there would only be nibbles and wine/soft drinks afterwards, not a meal as people, especially those who had travelled some distance, would want to get home.
- 7.3 **Bring and Share Lunch on 24 July:** Several members of the PCC had volunteered to help with this and would get together in advance. Anne Coates was co-ordinating arrangements.
- 7.4 **Rescheduling of July PCC meeting:** This was scheduled to take place on 19 July, which would now be impossible, so the alternative dates were the week before (12 July) which clashed with a Choir Committee meeting (though this could be changed) or the week after (26 July) which had the disadvantage of being at the start of the school holidays, when some members might be unable to attend, but the big advantage that Gill O'Neill would by then be in post and could chair her first PCC meeting and get to know members before the August break. It was **agreed** to hold the July PCC on 26 July.
- 7.5 **Working with Gill in the early stages of her ministry:** The Churchwardens will work with Gill to find out how she wants to take things forward, and the people she wants to meet. She will start work on 20 July and her first task will be the School's end of term service, though she will only need to lead the prayers at the beginning. She has not yet stated which day

she would like as her day off.

8. Parish Pledge to the Parish Support Fund

- 8.1 This had been discussed briefly at the previous meeting, and the Diocese need information before the end of June on the amount which the Parish is likely to commit to the Support Fund for 2017. Michael asked if it might be possible to delay a decision until, say, November but Anne Coates explained that the Diocese needed this information in order to plan their own budgets, and they might have to make cut-backs.
- 8.2 In discussions (informed by the Treasurer, Sarah) the following points were made:
- In the current year, St John's is committed to paying £95,000, which was now recognised as being too high, with decreasing numbers in the congregation and income going down; the Church were struggling financially and had to set a deficit budget (with an operational deficit estimated in the region of £16,000).
 - The PCC needs to be careful and prudent, and it would be wrong to commit Gill to paying more than the church can realistically afford. The figure could always be reviewed in, say, 6 months' time.
 - While St John's does have reserves, some of these had been set aside for necessary repairs (the Goose Green Centre proposed some major works over the summer, and the Church also needs some repairs).
 - It is also unwise to draw unduly on the reserves while aware that these cannot be easily built up again.
 - A stewardship campaign will be needed at some time in the future, but should not be done immediately; Gill needed to be given time to settle into her post and the church also needed to stabilise and move forward after two very difficult years.
 - The Diocese estimate that to support a full time member of the clergy, £72,000 per annum is needed, but the Parish Support Fund also covers other things happening in the Diocese and information/support provided to churches.
 - There is a huge variety in the level of pledges made by churches in the Deanery. Three parishes give around £25,000 each, but at the top end of the scale, St Barnabas are pledging £250,000.
 - The pledging process makes every church think 'What are we getting for this?' (and it was suggested that, in a sense, St John's did not 'get its money's worth' while it had no incumbent; and the lack of an incumbent was reflected in the drop in giving). But there is also the need to support other parishes.
- 8.3 Sarah, as Treasurer, proposed that the church should commit £70,000 to the Parish Support fund; this was seconded by Anne Coates, and **agreed** unanimously. Although this is far less than in the previous two years, it reflects the church's drop in income and the overly high payment to which St John's is committed in the current year. Rachel (as churchwarden) and Sarah (as Treasurer) will complete the requisite form and return this to the Diocese.

Action: Rachel Mills, Sarah Goudge

9. Reports

- 9.1 **Finance:** Sarah reported that the new bank account is now open, though it has not yet been used, and will make things easier as she will now be able to do electronic transfers from the account. Sarah will be going to a workshop for new Treasurers being held at Trinity House.
- 9.2 **Finance Committee:** The Committee had not met since the last meeting so there was nothing to report.

- 9.3 **Goose Green Centre:** There was nothing of great substance to report, except that the Centre had major works planned for the summer.
- 9.4 **Premises:** There was nothing to report.
- 9.5 **Deanery:** Anne Coates reported that Susan Height had been commissioned as Area Dean, and the Synod had welcomed Alan Croft as the new representative from St John's. (Attendance from St John's representatives was always exemplary). The Deanery Synod had discussed the Parish Support Fund at some length. St Stephen's now had a G4 mast on their spire, for which they received £14,000 a year. Anne reminded members that when the Deanery have speakers, the first part of the meeting is always open to anybody, and if any PCC member had a topic on which they would like to hear a speaker, they should let her know.
- 9.6 **Safeguarding:** The Safeguarding team had met just before the PCC meeting and Libby reported that the team now has a mobile shared on a rota basis and a poster is displayed in the church identifying the team members.
- 9.7 **Communications:** At the present moment there is no 'Communications Group', just Anne Coates, and people are needed who can commit to helping with the website. Christine is very good on the website but cannot commit much time, and she also does the pew sheet. Anne and Jim look after Twitter and this is going well, with the local papers re-tweeting news on events etc.
- 9.8 **Young People's work:** Julie reported that as various people had said how much they enjoyed the Christian Aid 'Big Breakfast' and would like to see something like this again, she planned to do this again later in the year. Jean and one of her friends and Charles Corbin were interested in helping. Anne Coates suggested doing this for the Advent Homeless appeal. There was some discussion about the prices – which had been quite low, but it was a balance between raising funds and not wanting to exclude anyone who could not afford it. One option, in line with the previous event, could be to put up a list of suggested prices, but say 'or what you can afford', and trust people to put the money in collecting boxes. Everyone agreed it was good to involve the young people in this way and Vince suggested the 'breakfast' could be held more than twice a year.

10. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday, 26 July 2016, after the 7.30 pm Mass