

## Minutes of the St Peter's Church Wrecclesham PCC Meeting on 20.01.21

*The meeting took place via Zoom, owing to the current COVID-19 social distancing measures.*

Present: Revd Jacqueline Drake-Smith, Gerald Blues, Vanda Bolton, Jonathan Covey, Robert Durrant, Andrew Jones, Ian Lapworth, Pat Lapworth, Naomi Parkin-Tyrie, Paul Smith, Sally Woods and Philip Yates. Chris Wilkes was present in the capacity of Parish Administrator.

The meeting commenced at 8.05pm.

- 1) **Welcome:** Jacqueline Drake-Smith welcomed the members of the PCC. At JDS's request, Naomi Parkin-Tyrie read out her *Sonnet of Benediction*.
- 2) **Apologies for Absence:** No apologies for absence were received.
- 3) **Minutes of the Meeting Held on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2020:** The minutes from the PCC meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> November 2020 were approved unanimously by the PCC.
- 4) **Matters Arising:**
  - a) **Leverton Hall storage (Item 4c):** Ian Lapworth reported that the new storage in the Leverton Hall is complete and groups are beginning to use it. JDS thanked Gerald Blues for his work and his graciousness regarding the cost of the storage.
  - b) **Stone work (Item 9):** Work on the church building began on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> January with removal of the redundant chimney flue. Philip Yates said that he was taking photos of the work in progress and would write a report for the parish magazine.
  - c) **Lift repair work (Item 9):** It was reported that repairs to the disabled lift had now been completed. An email had been circulated to the PCC on the 1<sup>st</sup> December requesting approval for payment to cover the repairs, which was unanimously given. It was noted that the lift must be regularly maintained and cleaned in order to keep it in good working order. Pat Lapworth said that next year we could consider some alternative lift maintenance companies, of which she has a list.
  - d) **Parish magazine (Item 17):** It was agreed to discuss this item as part of the Treasurer's Report (see below).
- 5) **Hope for Tomorrow: Stewardship Campaign:** IL reported that there has been a net increase in planned giving as a result of the campaign, in addition to several one-off donations. JDS thanked everyone involved in organising the campaign.
- 6) **Treasurer's Report:** Inserted below is PL's Treasurer's Report with items discussed and approved by the PCC at the meeting highlighted in italics.

### Treasurer's Report as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020

#### Leverton Hall

- Obviously the hall income suffered this year due to Covid-19 closures. Cleaning (when the hall is in use) is now contracted out to Farnham Office Cleaning which incurs additional expense but is very necessary.
- The net lettings income after expenses in 2020 was £1,786 compared to £5,920 in 2019. As a result of this we are not making a transfer to the PCC's General Fund.
- On a positive side, over the last 18 months, we have invested money from the Hall Reserve, designated donations and grants in the updating of hall kitchen, lighting, electrical system, storage and toilets and there have been many positive comments on the improvements. This is an investment for the future.

- In 2020 towards the cost of the new storage we are grateful to have received £4,000 in donations, £1,000 of Gift Aid from these and a £500 Community Grant.

## **PCC General Fund**

### **Income**

- There has been a change in the way that people choose to give, e.g. there are less brown Stewardship Envelopes in use but more people paying via PGS. Cash collections are much reduced as a result of Covid-19 and we are seeing some donations via the new GoodBox. This change is reflected in the budget for 2021. The Planned Giving budget is based on the results of the Stewardship Campaign adjusted for gains and losses during the year.
- The Gift Aid refund includes that claimed against total Voluntary Giving and Individual Donations as appropriate.
- As mentioned there is no transfer from the Leverton Hall due to loss of lettings income. Our income from fundraising, fees (weddings and funerals) and other sources where people would be joining together has reduced.
- Magazine income has fallen. Possibly due to non-collection of subscriptions (Covid-19-related) and failure of some advertisers to pay.
- Overall income was £6,309 below budget which is quite good, all things considered, and would have been far worse without the generous one-off donations, of which we cannot rely upon when budgeting for 2021.

### **Expenditure**

- Our Parish Share commitment was £58,946. However the Diocese gave us rebates in quarters two, three and four totalling £4,467 reducing our Share to £54,479. By the year end we had paid £45,561 towards this. In our discussions with the Diocese earlier in the year we said that we hoped to make a further payment at the year-end according to our finances. Following discussions with Jacqueline we recommend a further £5,000 payment taking our total payment for 2020 to the £50,561 on the spreadsheet. This still means we have underpaid by £3,918 but feel that we have made a good gesture towards what we owe. *The PCC agreed this payment: Sally Woods proposed and PY seconded.*
- For 2021 across the Diocese it has been agreed to pause the increases in Parish Share due following the changes in PS calculations. For 2021 we should be paying £58,946, however, this would result in a deficit which we cannot prudently consider absorbing. I am proposing that we increase our current reduced monthly payment of £3,000 to £3,500 for 2021 resulting in a total payment of £42,000. This means an underpayment of £16,946. We would again review this at the end of 2021 and see if we can make an additional payment. *The PCC approved Parish Share payment totalling £42,000 for 2021: Rob Durrant proposed and Andrew Jones seconded.*
- Our overall expenditure was £17,892 below budget for the reasons noted on the spreadsheet. This is mainly underpayment of Parish Share, reduced payments to Organist and Parish Administrator, and non-utilisation of the £5,000 Major Repair budget. You will note the expenditure for Major Repairs budgeted for 2021 which only allows for the payment due on the lift repairs (December 2020) and the committed stone works which have now commenced. We are not budgeting for any further significant items in this area.
- I have used the established formula for calculating 2020 Outward Giving and have used the £50,561 figure for Parish Share as part of this calculation. This results in a sum of £1,033 for

Outward Giving. Following various collections at Christmas we have sent cheques for £207.65 to the Children's Society, £126.60 to Step by Step and £196 to Seeds for Development as well as making donations following our Harvest service. *The PCC agreed the sum of £1,033 for Outward Giving: AJ proposed and SW seconded. It was also agreed that we should continue to support the same charities, particularly in the current challenging climate.*

- Our deficit for the year was £6,489 which we have funded by drawing £7,000 from the Legacy Fund as previously agreed.

### **Parish Funds**

- At 31<sup>st</sup> December, the General Fund stood at £16,583 which includes the £7,000 transferred in from the Legacy Fund earlier in the year.
- When looking at the other funds please remember that we have part funded the new storage in the Hall and have agreed expenditure for the stonework yet to be paid, of around £14,500 including VAT. This will be covered by a transfer to General Funds from the Legacy Fund. We will apply for a grant to cover the VAT but this cannot be guaranteed. Any VAT to be recovered in this instance will be returned to the Legacy Fund.
- Parish Funds have been falling over the last few years and with the budgeted deficit in 2021 will fall further.
- As at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020 we are compliant with the PCC's Reserves Policy.

### **Budget 2021**

- I have done my best to draw up a budget for 2021 based upon 2020 figures and allowing for the many uncertainties in 2021. You will note that there are two budget columns for 2021 on the spreadsheet, the first allowing for full payment of Parish Share at £58,946 resulting in a deficit of £22,271 on the General Fund, the second budget is based upon the reduced Parish Share of £42,000 (£3,500 per month) recommended above. This results in a deficit of £5,325.
- Both budgets include the transfer in of £14,500 from the Legacy Fund.
- This all assumes no extraordinary and unforeseen expenditures.
- We cannot budget for one-off donations inwards.

### **Magazine**

You will note in the budget that we have included a new cost line for Magazine Printing. The current magazine printing team are unable to continue this task each month. We have investigated the cost of outsourcing the printing of the magazine and we have also considered increasing the subscription to the magazine by £1 per year. Subscriptions should cover the cost of printing with advertising income providing a level of "profit". Roger Jefferyes will continue with the editing and compilation of the magazine, the current team will continue to package and distribute the magazines each month, and Sue Davies will oversee the administration. There will be a significant reduction in the usage of our current printer and therefore costs relating to that printer. *The PCC approved the plan to raise the price of the parish magazine: Vanda Bolton proposed and PL seconded.*

### **Printer**

If we outsource printing of the magazine it is likely that we will not require such a large "industrial" type printer. We are discussing with Jacqueline, Sue and Chris the possibility of replacing the current printer with a more reliable "office" quality laser jet colour printer/scanner. This would probably be kept at the vicarage. An anonymous donor has offered to purchase the

new printer so there will be no initial cost to the parish. The printer will be parish property. PCC to fund paper and ink cartridges as at present.

*The PCC approved the plan to dispose of the old printer once new arrangements are in place: IL proposed and VB seconded. PL suggested that we could sell the printer on eBay or a similar website. Gerald Blues said that the printer servicing company might offer some money for it. It was agreed that it would be good to free up some space in the Leverton Hall.*

*PL noted that there is a problem with magazine subscriptions not being paid. However, Sue Davies now has an updated list of subscribers so hopefully we would be able to sort this out this year. SW mentioned an alternative model for funding the magazine, which she knows has been successful elsewhere: each child at the church school receives a free copy of the parish magazine, meaning that businesses are keen to pay for advertisements. GB said that, at the moment, it is difficult to get local businesses interested in advertising, and that it is also difficult to obtain fees from the current advertisers.*

*The Budget for 2021 was approved by the PCC: PL proposed and PY seconded.*

### **Pat and George Colbran Memorial**

We have received donations totalling £495 in memory of Pat and George Colbran and feel that this should be used for something specific and tangible. Following discussions with Jacqueline and being aware for some time that the white altar cloths are in poor condition, the thought is that we use this money to fund the purchase of some new altar cloths. Indicative costs from J&M Sewing Services, specialists in church supplies and used by Jacqueline suggests that suitable cloths might cost in the region of £150 for the main altar and £115 for the smaller, old St Timothy's, altar.

*JDS noted that Pat and George were long-standing, traditional church members so they would have appreciated the new altar linen. Their names could be embroidered at one end of each cloth. Jonathan Covey agreed that new linen was a good idea as the current cloths are quite threadbare. IL observed that we probably have enough money to buy two cloths each for the big and the small altar. The PCC agreed the purchase of new altar linen: IL proposed and AJ seconded.*

*JDS proposed a vote of thanks to PL and IL. She asked members of the PCC to think and pray about candidates for the post of Treasurer once PL stands down next year.*

- 7) Altar Linen:** This item was covered under the Treasurer's Report above.
- 8) Grass Cutting and churchyard maintenance:** IL reported that Sue and Tim Davies would arrange for the church lawnmowers to be serviced. He said that everyone on the grass-cutting rota has agreed to continue. PY offered to go back on the rota now that his knee is better. AJ offered to help with strimming, using the church strimmer. IL said that anyone is welcome to help with weeding and pruning in the churchyard.
- 9) Worship, Mission and Spirituality Sub-committee Report (+ Events Team):** JDS said that we would be trying to recruit more people to help organise events this year, as currently the burden is falling on the same small group of people. AJ observed that this was a common problem with voluntary groups.
- 10) Deanery Synod Report:** The new Deanery reps, VB and AJ, reported back on their first Deanery Synod meeting (held on Zoom). The DS are continuing with their aim to build greater unity between churches in the Deanery. The new website has yet to be launched

but individual churches will be encouraged to be a part of it. The next DS meeting has been postponed.

- 11) **Safeguarding:** SW reported that the Diocese is recommending we consider whether all PCC members should have a DBS check, and it seems likely that DBS checks for PCC members will become a requirement in due course. At the moment, only churchwardens and people that have more contact with children or vulnerable adults are required to have checks. SW stressed that all PCC members must undertake safeguarding training. GB is the only PCC member who has not yet completed the training, as he is new. SW noted that we will need to review risk assessments before children's groups are restarted.
- 12) **Health and Safety:** SW observed that a couple of risk assessments will need updating before we re-open the church building for services, including the Covid-19 one. RD will be helping SW with the church fire risk assessment this year. It was also noted that the stewards briefing needs to be updated. The vestry will need to be decluttered before more people start using it again. IL reported that he did carry out some tidying before Christmas.  
JDS said that she has offered to livestream the World Day of Prayer service, which St Peter's was supposed to be hosting on the 5<sup>th</sup> March, as we won't have returned to church by then. She reported that Sascha Lockett's funeral will probably take place on the 5<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> February, with 30 people. SW and JC offered to help move the seats for the service.  
The PCC agreed that the church should stay closed for public worship until at least the end of February: PL proposed and IL seconded. It was agreed to revisit the situation when the government relaxes restrictions.  
The Small Church risk assessment was approved: IL proposed and JDS seconded.
- 13) **Events Team Report:** RD noted that we would not be able to plan any events until, perhaps, the beginning of March as there is still so much uncertainty.
- 14) **Preparation for APCM 2021 and Annual Report:** The APCM was scheduled for the 25<sup>th</sup> April. NPT confirmed that she would start work on the Annual Report soon.
- 15) **Eco Church:** PL noted that we are holding £117 for the tree fund in the General Account.
- 16) **St Peter's School:** SW noted that they have a quarter to a third of children in school (children of key workers etc.) at the moment and that we should keep the staff in our prayers.
- 17) **Promotion of Forthcoming Events and Special Services:** VB drew attention to the Zoom Quiz that is scheduled for the 30<sup>th</sup> January.
- 18) **Items from the Chair:** JDS reported that VB's son may be able to help revamp the church website. She suggested that it would be good to have a working party to think about it. We also have a benefactor who is willing to fund improvements.  
JDS also reported that Christopher and Harriet Ellis would be moving to Oxford soon.

The meeting adjourned at 9.47pm.

Date, time and place of next meeting: **17th March 2020 at 8pm via Zoom.**