

The Parish Church of St Margaret, Rainham

Parochial Church Council

Wednesday, 14th April 2021

via MS Teams, 19:30



ST. MARGARET'S
RAINHAM

Present: Revd Christine Allen (CA); Heather Baker (HB); Nigel Barfoot (NB); Ann Critchley (AC); Lorna Dyer (LD); Nick Grief (NG); Felicity Holton (FH); Davina O'Brien (DOB); David Ormiston (DO); Linda Randall (LR); Owen Smith (OS); Jodie Ward (JW); Kayleigh Ward (KW); Revd Nathan Ward (NW) - Chair; Terry Whittaker (TW)

PCC MINUTES

Item	Details	Action
1.	Opening Prayer:	
	NB opened the meeting with prayer.	
2.	Apologies:	
	NW chaired the meeting. Apologies were received from Janet Garnons-Williams (JGW), Frank Pantony (FP), Revd Jonathan Jennings (JPJ) and Charley Whittaker (CW).	
3.	Finance Committee Update:	
	The predicted general balance for the first quarter was £93,000, actual stands at £101,000 – this excludes an approximate £7,000 credit from the closure of the Bookshop. February and March accounts will be closed soon.	
i.	<u>Giving</u> – the Committee proposed that the 6:30 service be a starting place in trying out ways to encourage people to start or increase their church giving. TW to liaise with NW before this goes live, and it will be reviewed at the June meeting. In relation to general giving, the Finance Committee were tasked with comparing St Margaret's figures against national rating.	TW/NW Finance Gp
ii.	<u>Millennium Centre and Hospitality</u> – following on from previous discussions about introducing a new upstairs area to provide hospitality for both church and outside events. This involves the creation of a bar area, food servery, installation of a professional kitchen and redecoration. Provisional costs had been sanctioned within a £15,000 budget, however, after conversations with various contractors and obtaining quotes, this may be closer to £25,000. Approximate costs are broken down as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electrical work (to incorporate all electrical cooking means for eco reasons) - £5,500. • Kitchen equipment (second-hand), including bar - £11,000. • Decoration (tiling in kitchen, decoration in the hallway, new blinds) - £5,500 Detailed costings had been carried out and the Finance Committee were happy that these are all in order. <u>Points of discussion and/or concern:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the renovation of upstairs rather than downstairs is due to the Pre-School's use of the downstairs area and upstairs being a more suitable hospitality venue. - the added value this could have for the church / return on capital. - concern about the viability of the project and proposed generated income. - concern surrounding the problems with noise (although it was noted that the air conditioning units had recently been serviced and found to be defective, so once they are working properly the need for opening windows will be lessened). - the need to obtain other quotes and find out whether anyone in the congregation could help with some of the decoration/tiling. 	

	It was agreed that TW would circulate the detailed costings to PCC. TW proposed and DOB seconded that: 'the PCC agree to an overspend of up to £10,000 on the previously agreed £15,000'. FOR: 13 AGAINST: 2 ABSTENTION: 0 Proposal carried	TW
iii.	<u>Pre-School</u> – TW met with the manager. This was a difficult meeting as the relationship between church and Pre-School has not been good and stems from historical hurt. New lines of communication have been opened and TW will follow up in a month's time.	TW
4.	Operations Group Update:	
i.	<u>Maintenance Tasks</u> – the schedule of maintenance continues, with most now being completed; clearing of church guttering remains outstanding. The electricians in the tower had been re-tested and passed successfully, however the inspection in Childscroft Road was unsuccessful and will be re-done in the next two weeks as well as a gas inspection and the trees looked at.	Ops Gp
ii.	<u>South Wall</u> – NB and Dan Barfoot had carried out a further inspection of the damage which appears to be caused by tree roots; it is estimated that 2,000 bricks will be needed to repair the areas of biggest concern as well as some other places of the North wall, with estimated costs of £4-£5,000. DOB is looking into the legalities surrounding the upkeep of a grade 1 listed wall in a churchyard and is awaiting a response from the Diocese. There was some discussion as to whether a structural report should be sought to ascertain the safety of the wall before pushing on with repairs, but it was agreed that the damage will still require repair and we should therefore obtain quotes.	DOB
iii.	<u>Norse Contract</u> – this is still being negotiated.	Ops Gp
iv.	<u>Removal of hopper</u> – DOB had written to the Friends of St Margaret's to advise them of the proposed removal of the hopper which they funded, to be replaced with recycling bins. A faculty will be needed. DOB proposed and KW seconded that: 'the PCC apply for a faculty to remove the hopper in the churchyard'. FOR: 15 AGAINST: 0 ABSTENTION: 0 Unanimously agreed.	Ops Gp
v.	<u>Churchyard Risk Assessment</u> – a hazard map is to be created, together with engagement rules of volunteers. OS proposed and TW seconded that: 'the PCC delegate responsibility to the Operations Group to sign off the Risk Assessment'. FOR: 15 AGAINST: 0 ABSTENTION: 0 Unanimously agreed	Ops Gp
vi.	<u>Terms of Reference</u> – the group had reviewed their TOR and propose to change the group name to 'Repairs and Maintenance'. This will be presented to the next PCC meeting.	Ops Gp
vii.	<u>Headstone Check</u> – this needs to be carried out during the year; a written method statement will be created.	Ops Gp
5.	Safeguarding Update:	
	There are no new matters to report.	
i.	<u>Mobilisation Strategy for Safeguarding Matrix</u> – action points are still waiting to be finalised.	NW
6.	Community Team Update:	
	KW reported that the team have worked hard and St Margaret's have earned an A Rocha UK bronze award; meetings are ongoing to ascertain what needs to happen next to upgrade this to silver. St Margaret's are taking part in the celebrations for Earth Day on Thursday 22 April;	Eco team

	a banner has been provided and will be displayed outside church. DOB volunteered to put this up.	DOB
7.	Mission:	
i.	<p><u>Hope into Action update</u> – various potential trustees for the CIO have been approached and have agreed to come on board. They would form a strong and competent team, each with expertise and knowledge in different areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jim Gilbourne – homeless charity • Roger Harpum – home refurb/project management. • Vanessa Nichols – social housing • Martin Fielder-White - accounts • Janet Garnons-Williams – legal • Nathan Ward - residential care/safeguarding <p>The Diocese have agreed to pay for legal advice and the cost of the setup of the CIO. It is not envisaged that there will be any cost to St Margaret’s.</p> <p>NW proposed and DOB seconded the proposal that: ‘the PCC set up a CIO, where the PCC is its sole Member, to take on a full franchise of Hope into Action’.</p> <p>FOR: 15 AGAINST: 0 ABSTENTION: 0 Unanimously carried</p>	
ii.	<p><u>Future Plans</u> – NW referred to the document that had previously been circulated - this formed a cohesive outline for future development. He had received some helpful feedback and confirmed that he remains committed to choral evensong, even though this is not overtly mentioned in the document (along with some other areas of church life). NW will be meeting with Bishop Simon and Archdeacon Andy on 15 April to talk through this document.</p> <p><u>General Feedback:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The PCC were unanimously positive although it was recognised that there was work to be done to ensure that the congregation fully understood the proposal and bought in to the vision. • Leading small to grow big was recognised as being a good model. • The vision was well-shaped and, whilst adventurous, it felt St Margaret’s shaped providing everyone with an opportunity to be involved somewhere. There was a sense that this was a natural progression of the journey forwards. • Timing was important and the church is well set at this moment to step forward into this new era. • It was recognised that there had been a lot of substantial documentation produced of late and it was important for us to evidence delivery. • We need to ensure that our language is in keeping with our spirit; it may be worth reviewing to ensure that we do not cause unintended offence to others. • There was a conversation about how this would affect the role of the Vicar with the view being expressed that the Vicar would become more of a ‘rancher’ than a shepherd, overseeing the leaders of the various areas of ministry. • It was noted that the model did not explicitly cover the question of church planting, a comment made with specific reference to our parish ‘below’ the railway line. It was noted that the Concorde are willing to host Church. • It was recognised that this was a high-level plan and specific requests were made to incorporate peace and justice and Harare in the final detail plan. • A request was made that when presenting this document more widely we should be mindful of the size and style of font to ensure it is readable by all. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was agreed that this document is not to be circulated beyond the PCC at this stage. The staff team are meeting next week to begin to shape the detail and NW will feed back at the next PCC meeting. 	NW
iii.	<p><u>House for Duty</u> – this will form part of the 15 April meeting with +Simon and the Archdeacon. In the interim, TW advised that was also an option to consider using the house for a youth worker, to fill the current gap in ministry. A young couple had been in touch, via social media, having followed the ‘Life at the Vicarage’ page and in response to their prayers about their future. They have been engaged in both church youth work and a project with excluded young people in New Zealand and recently moved to the UK. NW, KW, JGW and TW have spoken with them on separate occasions and feel this could be worth exploring further subject to PCC agreement.</p> <p><u>To consider:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the current budget does not have an allocation for this, however, there will be some money available in the second half of the year following Kate Canton’s recent letter advising of her intention to retire at the end of July. the only way to do youth work properly is by employing a qualified youth worker (a thought borne out by NW and TW’s conversations about future church development with other notable church leaders). if this were felt to be the right way forward, there could be two options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> obtain grants to enable employment, or offer premises with expenses. there is still the church administration to consider, although some of this could possibly be considered in the apprenticeship role starting in August. <p>NW reiterated that nothing had been agreed to beyond an initial conversation, but it was important for PCC to be aware of the bigger picture.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Finance Committee should prepare a document with potential costings for the next PCC meeting, when the outcome of the Bishop/ Archdeacon meeting would also be known.</p>	Finance Gp / NW
iv.	<u>School of Theology</u> – an opportunity for good, ‘old-fashioned’ Bible teaching. NW advised that Rev Peter Guinness had agreed, in principle, to run this if required.	
9.	Minutes of the Meetings on 10 March 2021 and Matters Arising (not already recorded on the Agenda):	
	<p>The minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting subject to the following:</p> <p>6.e ‘fairy rocks’ to be amended to ‘fairy doors’.</p> <p>7.i proposal “the PCC follow NW’s timeline for the re-opening of Church and seek permission from the Diocese, using the appropriate wording, to extend the closure of Church until 19 May or the start of Phase Three of the Government Road Map, whichever comes first”.</p> <p>It was noted that this should likely read ‘whichever is the latest’ allowing for the outside chance that the government may set back the date for Phase Three. It was agreed to formally look at this at the next meeting as this was before the 19 May date.</p>	Agenda item
i.	3.iii 123 Station Road – transfer documents have been signed but still awaiting date to exchange.	DOB
ii.	3.iv Bookshop Closure – NW met with Hamish and he is in touch with DOB to complete this.	
iii.	3.v Ops Manager Job Description – this was circulated prior to the meeting. All were in favour of adopting this.	
iv.	3.vi Bankline training – TW had completed this.	

v.	3.x Treasurer Role – one candidate had responded positively, still awaiting responses from two others.	
vi.	3.xi Depreciation of assets – this is being worked on by the Finance Committee and will be included on the Agenda of the next meeting.	Finance Gp
vii.	4.i – maintenance work on the lightning conductor and lifts had been completed.	
viii.	8.i Eco plaque – it has been decided to leave this free-standing so it can be moved around church if needed.	
ix.	8.ii Living in Love and Faith – NG and NW to meet; there is a possibility of opening this up to others from the deanery.	NW/NG
x.	8.iii Harare – CA confirmed the video call with St Phillips was very positive with 14 people attending. There has since been various email exchanges and a further meeting is to be arranged.	CA
xi.	9.iii Kent Organists Association – a letter of apology had been received from the Association confirming they will take the article out of the online publication and an apology will be issued in their next edition.	
10.	AOB:	
i.	<p><u>Re-opening Plans</u> – CA requested this be reviewed given that positive COVID cases are in decline and both pubs and non-essential shops are reopening. The Diocese had also suggested that this decision be re-examined given that St Margaret’s was only one of five churches in the diocese not open at Easter.</p> <p><u>Summary of discussions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whilst the building may be closed, with three-quarters of the services online, church is still very much open. • A suggestion was made that we could open for private prayer but not for services; it was noted that our dispensation relates to services (of Holy Communion) which we would otherwise be legally obliged to carry out. • Pubs are only open outside, not inside. Registering a death still requires you to phone and not do it in person. • The government made a dispensation for churches opening based on mental well-being; St Margaret’s are attempting to respond to this and providing support in other ways. • The original logic for the building remaining closed hasn’t changed. • The over 70 age group, which make up much of the congregation, will mostly be fully vaccinated by 19 May and therefore better covered. • Regular phone conversations with congregation members who have been cautious about reopening earlier infer they are content to allow the government experts to determine the ‘right’ time for being face-to-face. • PCC represent the wider views of the congregation; the majority of these being cautious about opening the building any earlier. • The consensus was for sticking to the planned timetable and this would be reviewed again at the next PCC. 	
ii.	Congratulations were extended to TW who had been licensed to the Deanery as Lay Funeral Minister and as Chaplain to Kent Police at Medway police station.	
iii.	<p>It was noted that a letter had been received from Kate Canton giving notice of her intention to retire at the end of July 2021. NW to respond on behalf of the PCC thanking her for her years of service.</p> <p>The Finance Committee are to bring a proposal to next PCC about the financial consequences of this.</p>	Finance Gp
11.	Dates of Next Meeting:	
	Wednesday 12 May at 19:30	

	APCM Wednesday 19 May	
12.	Closing Prayer:	
	OS closed the meeting in prayer at 21:30	