

**The Parish Church of St Margaret, Rainham**  
**Parochial Church Council**

Full meeting of the PCC on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2022  
in the Millennium Centre (Upper Hall), 19:30



**Present:** Hollie Allen (HA); Heather Baker (HB); Lorna Dyer (LD); Nick Grief (NG); Felicity Holton (FH); Davina O'Brien (DOB); Owen Smith (OS) – Vice chair; Terry Whittaker (TW)

**In Attendance:** Jo Whittaker (JW) – Secretary

**PCC MINUTES**

Item	Details	Action
<b>1.</b>	<b>Welcome and Opening Prayer:</b>	
	OS chaired the meeting as NW was leading Bible Study. Time was spent in open prayer, with particular focus for NW and family.	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Apologies:</b> Nigel Barfoot (NB); Janet Garnons-Williams (JGW); Sam Holden (SH); Revd Jonathan Jennings (JPJ); David Ormiston (DO); Frank Pantony (FP); Linda Randall (LR); Kayleigh Ward (KW); Nathan Ward (NW); Charley Whittaker (CW)	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Minutes of the Meetings on 14 July and 21 September 2022 and Matters Arising:</b>	
	It was agreed by all that both sets of minutes were a true and accurate record of the meetings.  A question had been asked as to whether the reference to ex-offenders in the July minutes (para. 5) related to ALL ex-offenders or just those on the sex offenders' register. It was thought that it was the latter, but JW to speak to NW to clarify this.	<b>JW/NW</b>
i.	Signing of paper minutes – awaiting a response.	<b>JW</b>
ii.	Tafara Update: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NG reported that he had met with Bishop Farai in Canterbury and this had been a good introduction.</li> <li>• The Diocesan Poverty and Hope Appeal was raising funds to support projects within its link diocese, one of which was a beekeeping project in Harare. NG hoped to find a way to link local Medway beekeepers with those in Harare.</li> <li>• The Chair of the Harare Companion Diocese Support Group had recently stepped down and NG had taken on this role subject to confirmation by the Bishop's Council.</li> <li>• DOB confirmed that US\$4.5k (£4k approx.) had been sent from St Margaret's towards the rebuilding project in Tafara following the recent appeal in church.</li> <li>• Rev Christine Allen (diocesan link coordinator) and NG were due to meet online with Rev Philip in Tafara.</li> </ul>	
iii.	New plaques in the Garden of Remembrance – the PCC's decision had been relayed to the family member by NW.	
iv.	Removal of Candle/Advent Wreath stand from Terrier – this had been done by the Churchwardens. JW to confirm with NW whether a letter had been sent to the family.	<b>JW/NW</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Safeguarding Update:</b>	
	There had been no new matters notified.  The historic Safer Recruitment documents had been loaded onto the new system and were being updated with regards to training.	
<b>5.</b>	<b>Finance Committee Update:</b>	
	TW reported that the Finance Committee had not met this month but would bring a comprehensive report to the next meeting together with a proposal for the 2023 budget. However, TW advised that there were no concerns and we were on budget despite the Millennium Centre income running below expectation and giving being	

	<p>down – this was balanced out by legacy income which was unbudgeted and the rental income on Childscroft Road.</p> <p>There would likely be some unbudgeted cost incurred between now and January (max. £600 per month) relating to the Project Manager – see item 7. Mission below.</p>	
i.	Ways to highlight giving to congregations – deferred to next Finance meeting.	
ii.	Wedding/funeral fees and possibility of re-budgeting – this would be part of the new budget.	
iii.	Centrica shares and changes to banking/signatories –deferred to the next Finance meeting.	
<b>6.</b>	<b>Maintenance &amp; Utilities Committee Update:</b>	
	<p>DOB advised that the utility contracts for the Millennium Centre were due for renewal shortly. Only 12-month contracts were being offered and the cheapest quote was from EDF for gas and electricity, however this was three times as much as our current bills. As a short-term solution it was agreed that the Finance Committee should take the decision with due consideration being given to the eco status of the utility companies concerned.</p> <p>This raised a question of what the parameters were for decision making and stewardship, especially with regard to the church’s eco status and potential bid to work towards being carbon zero. TW suggested that, subject to an architect being appointed (7. below), we would know more in this regard from their work and could use their plan to better shape our utility usage.</p> <p>The M&amp;U Group would be meeting soon to look at the next steps highlighted in the Quinquennial Report.</p>	<b>Finance Group</b>
i.	Church - Smart Meter and boiler repairs update – the boiler repairs had been done. There had been little interest from the usual smart meter companies and DOB was waiting for a quote from a boiler company.	
ii.	<p>Childscroft Road – The new tenants were in the property. The bathroom ventilation issue required a lot of work to figure out how best to deal with the problem and it was agreed with the tenants that they would open windows when the bathroom was in use.</p> <p>DOB advised that a complaint had been raised by a neighbour with regards to noise, which was being looked into.</p>	
<b>7.</b>	<b>Mission:</b>	
i.	<p><b>Appointment of Architects:</b></p> <p>TW advised that in line with the project timetable shared with the church at the end of September, we had until January 2023 to put together a cohesive plan and this required the appointment of an architect to shape the construction requirement of the ‘Putting Rainham First’ Project. A small group had been convened, based on gifting, to manage this stage of the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NW – chair</li> <li>• KW – community engagement</li> <li>• TW – negotiator</li> <li>• Lance Hanning – a professional in change management</li> <li>• Jean Penney – ‘making it happen’ person</li> <li>• DOB – link with the wider church</li> </ul> <p>It was noted that this group was NOT to shape the project nor make decisions on behalf of the church, but rather to manage and run this phase of the project.</p> <p>The appointed architect would need to be experienced with both old and new buildings and have the confidence of the DAC and the local authority. Three firms had been considered and two had provided a quote:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thomas Ford and Partners – who carried out the recent Quinquennial inspection, knew the church and had vast relevant experience . They were also recommended by the Uni of York team. Quote: £12,575 but with a possible</li> </ul>	

	<p>reduction to £11.5k as some of the work quoted for had already been done (e.g. statement of need and significance)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lee Evans Partnership – currently working within the diocese at the Kings Hill project and recommended by Keith Berry, the Project Manager. Quote: £10k approx.</li> </ul> <p>Upon detailed examination of the quotes it was clear that the Lee Evans quote included little consultation cost whereas the Thomas Ford quote had this fully costed. Lee Evans subsequently advised that they would be unable to work within the timeframe. TW suggested that, given the two quotes were sufficiently aligned to provide comfort that the figure proposed by Thomas Ford and Partners was appropriate, then they be appointed.</p> <p>There was a good discussion and a particular concern was raised about how the church would meet the cost of this, as well as the project manager’s costs, particularly with the current cost of living crisis. It was suggested that significant funding was available in the Heritage and the Heritage Savings Funds which would meet the lion’s share of these costs. The bills would fall to the 2023 year. The Finance Committee were alert to the fact that we need to keep appropriate reserves in place and would be mindful of this when presenting the budget. It was also pointed out that there were grants available for this type of project. On a related note it was reported that Rob Trice, an independent financial examiner, had also looked at the Millennium Centre utilisation and financial processes and had reported on both with a view to maximising income and ensuring good stewardship of our money.</p> <p>TW proposed and HA seconded the proposal that, ‘the PCC agree to appoint Thomas Ford and Partners to undertake the project work for delivery in January 2023 for a maximum cost of £12,575, noting that there would be some additional costs for the project management.’</p> <p>FOR: 8   AGAINST: 0   ABSTENTION: 0 Proposal unanimously agreed.</p>	
<b>8.</b>	<b>Correspondence:</b>	
	None to report	
<b>9.</b>	<b>AOB:</b>	
i.	<p><b>Just Say Hello Project partnering with Acts435</b> - <a href="https://www.acts435.org.uk/">https://www.acts435.org.uk/</a></p> <p>KW reported that food parcels were not the only source of support that was needed at this time had asked whether the PCC would support a partnership with the charity, Acts435, as a way to additionally support those in our community who were struggling with the rise in the cost of living. As a partner, the church would be able to post urgent needs to the charity on behalf of people in the community, donors could then give money through the Acts435 platform with the church then buying and giving the item that was needed. It was noted that the Diocese had recommended the charity as a way to help with the rise in the cost of living.</p> <p>There was good discussion and questions were raised as to how the money / administration would be managed, what processes would be adopted, how much time this would involve and who would be the named partner.</p> <p>OS proposed and DOB seconded the proposal that, ‘the PCC agree in principle to partner with Acts 435 subject to confirmation of 1) who the advocate would be, 2) the processes and management of the financial procedures and 3) standing committee approve the principles and practices before partnership was undertaken.’</p> <p>FOR: 8   AGAINST: 0   ABSTENTION: 0 Proposal unanimously agreed, subject to the conditions being met.</p>	
ii.	<p><b>Operations Manager:</b> TW advised that the Operations Manager, Jane Forsyth, had given a month’s notice which finished on 21 October. She and her partner were moving away for a lifestyle change. This had prompted the question of whether the role should be replaced like for like. Within the Putting Rainham First project a review of the Millennium Centre utilisation was underway which should be completed within six</p>	

	months. In the meantime, it was reported that Ana Setton had been offered a six-month contract to fill the position on a like for like basis, starting on 24 October. Ana had applied for the administrator role and had experience of finance management. There had been a handover by Jane to Ana and DOB had spent time with Jane to have an overview of the processes. As mentioned earlier, Rob Trice had also carried out an independent review of the finance systems and his report was very positive as to the utilisation of systems advising that we were as advanced as any church in our financial processes.	
<b>10.</b>	<b>Dates of Next Meetings:</b>	
	It was noted that an alternative date would be needed for the June 2023 meeting as this clashed with the annual parish dinner.	<b>JW/NW</b>
	<p>Wednesday 16 November, 19:30 on Teams  <b>2023:</b> <i>(all at 19:30)</i>  Thursday 19 January, Teams  Monday 20 February, Teams  Tuesday 21 March, Teams  Wednesday 19 April, Millennium Centre  Thursday 18 May, Millennium Centre  Monday 19 June, Millennium Centre – to be rearranged.</p>	
<b>11.</b>	<b>Closing Prayer:</b>	
	TW closed the meeting in prayer at 20:40	