

The Parish Church of St Margaret, Rainham
Parochial Church Council

Full meeting of the PCC on Wednesday 26 June 2024
19:30 in the Millennium Centre (lower hall)



Present: Heather Baker (HB); Lorna Dyer (LD); Janet Garnons-Williams (JGW) – Vice Chair; Simon Hall (SH); Philip Holdcroft (PH); Charley Holden(CH); Revd Jonathan Jennings (JPJ); David Ormiston (DO); Jean Penney (JP); Linda Randall (LR); Terry Whittaker (TW)

In Attendance: Jo Whittaker (JW) – Secretary;

PCC MINUTES

Item	Details	Action
1.	Welcome and Opening Act of Worship:	
	JGW welcomed everyone and explained that NW was ill and unable to attend the meeting. The start would be delayed whilst paperwork was sorted to enable smooth running of the meeting. The meeting then started in prayer at 20:00.	
2.	Apologies:	
	These were received from Nick Grief (NG); Felicity Holton (FH); Emi Inetianbor (EI); Revd Nathan Ward (NW).	
3.	Minutes of the Meeting on 22 May 2024:	
a.	TW proposed and LR seconded the minutes be accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting. All in favour.	
b.	Matters Arising:	
i.	Consultation document re. prayers for same sex couples (3b.i) – this was in circulation.	NW
ii.	Implementation of recommendations from accident report (3b.ii) - the possibility of additional temporary fencing around the newly planted hedges was still being looked into.	TW
4.	Safeguarding:	
a.	Concerns – one new concern had been reported in May.	
b.	Parish Safeguarding Officer – Jill Barfoot had advised that she was unable to take on the PSO role at this time. Enquiries were being made to find a suitable replacement. Safer Recruitment - it was hoped a new Lead Recruiter would soon be in role. Training – those still to undergo basic and/or foundation training were being written to individually and encouraged to undergo online training. JP was trying to access the church laptops to make them available to be used for this purpose. Basic DBS Checks – further information was still being sought regarding basic checks.	Safeguarding Cttee
5.	Church Overview:	
a.	Attendance (services and groups) – NW had provided documentation. To date, attendance was 19% higher than 2023. It was noted that the monthly attendance drop from April to May may relate to the two May Bank Holidays/holiday season.	
b.	Pastoral Services (baptisms, weddings, funerals, banns) – Funeral services continued to rise, despite this being the ‘quiet season’. NW to report on previous question regarding why the reading of Banns reported in the May meeting was lower than the number of weddings (possibly relative to away banns) at the next meeting.	NW
6.	Mission Strategy:	
i.	Review Objective Putting Rainham First Stage 1 – carried over to the next meeting due to NW absence.	NW
7.	Finance:	
a.	Position against budget: TW reported that the Finance Committee met on Monday to look at the May position and an in depth analysis would be prepared for the July meeting.	

	<p>Points to note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cash flow continued to be a challenge, partly due to bills being paid monthly and income from Acts Six being paid quarterly. <u>Action point</u>: to seek Acts Six agreement to pay monthly. Childscroft rent continued to be paid a month in arrears (see proposal below 7.b) Gas bills had not been received since February despite numerous requests; these were expected to be in the region of £5-6k which would create a challenge. A written complaint was being prepared. 	<p>Finance Cttee</p> <p>Finance Cttee</p>
b.	<p>Any unusual or unexpected expenditure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a solicitors bill of £1.3k approx. had been authorised and paid, however it subsequently transpired that this was a payment for the account of Hope into Action and should have been authorised in a different way. The amount would be added to the amounts owing from Hope into Action. The Finance Committee would put together a proposal for a change in authorisation procedures for the next meeting to avoid something like this happening again. Curtains in the South porch – whilst the £500 was a reasonable request, it was not recommended for payment now due to cash flow. It was noted there was a potential donation of curtains, but these would need to be checked for being flame retardant. Following a complaint regarding the condition of the churchyard due to a lack of volunteers able to trim the area, it was proposed Gary Williams be given a three month zero hours contract during growing season. This would cost £20/hour for up to three hours a week. TW proposed and JP seconded this proposal. FOR: 11 AGAINST: 0 ABSTENTION: 0 Proposal carried unanimously. Childscroft Road – given the rent was neither being paid in a timely manner nor for the correct amount (paying 2023 amount), the possibility of appointing a managing agent had been looked into which would cost between £1-1.8k. Whilst it made sense, the finance committee didn't view this as a good spend at this stage and felt a better way was to write to the tenants in the first instance chasing payment and offer a meeting – this would be signed by TW (chair of finance committee), DOB (treasurer) and SH & LR (Churchwardens). All agreed. <u>Action point</u>: TW to draft a letter and circulate to the treasurer and churchwardens. 	<p>Finance Cttee</p> <p>Finance Cttee</p> <p>TW</p>
8.	Health and Safety:	
a.	Checks – a table was being worked on with the maintenance group to bring monthly checks to PCC. Carried over to next meeting.	NW
b.	Accidents – none known to report.	
9.	Maintenance:	
	NW was due to meet with Mick Penney who was part of the maintenance team.	NW
10.	Correspondence:	
	None to report.	
11.	AOB:	
i.	<p><u>Appointment of architect for PRF</u> – whilst lots of work had been done by the church appointed architects, they hadn't yet delivered on accessibility. Rob & Vicky Schulz (team leads for PRF) and NW had informally met with another architect, Martin Steele, who had good credentials for church works. Following a good discussion with him about the accessibility issues it was the PRF committee request that PCC agree to appoint him to provide detailed drawings in this respect. Cost would be in the region of £5k plus VAT. A specific grant had been approved by the Church Estates Charity to cover this cost. After some discussion it was proposed by TW and seconded by PH that 'the PCC grant authority for Martin Steele to be appointed to carry out the work for which finance has been secured.'</p> <p>FOR: 11 AGAINST: 0 ABSTENTION: 0 Proposal carried unanimously</p> <p>It was noted that Thomas Ford were to remain as the official church architects.</p>	<p>JW/PRF Cttee</p>

ii.	<p><u>Hope into Action</u> – JGW provided an update and gave some background for the new PCC members re the HiA story. The trustees had recently made a decision to step away from the HiA parent organisation as changes at that level fundamentally changed the operating model for the work meaning that it was now unlikely to be financially viable. Our CIO was looking to continue operating, but was obliged to change its name, and the trustees were looking for local partners to help deliver on the purposes of the charity. All these steps meant that Church is still owed approx. £5k by the CIO which related to the legal costs associated with it being established. These were not seen as wasted costs as they would be necessary to set up the charity with or without the support of the HiA parent organisation. At this stage there was no time frame that could be provided for the repayment of these monies and it was noted that in the meantime the Church faced something that may be construed as a bad debt.</p>	
12.	Dates of Next Meeting:	
	<p>Thursday at 19:30 in Church on: 25th July 26th September 24th October 28th November</p>	
13.	Closing Act of Worship:	
	TW closed the meeting in prayer at 21:11	

