

The Parish Church of St Margaret, Rainham
Parochial Church Council

Full meeting of the PCC on Thursday 25th July 2024
19:30 in Church



Present: Lorna Dyer (LD); Janet Garnons-Williams (JGW); Nick Grief (NG); Simon Hall (SH); Philip Holdcroft (PH); Emi Inetianbor (EI); David Ormiston (DO); Jean Penney (JP); Linda Randall (LR); Revd Nathan Ward (NW); Terry Whittaker (TW)

In Attendance: Jo Whittaker (JW) – Secretary; Davina O’Brien (DOB) - Treasurer

PCC MINUTES

Item	Details	Action
1.	Welcome and Opening Act of Worship:	
	The meeting started with Evening Prayer.	
2.	Apologies:	
	These were received from Heather Baker (HB); Charley Holden (CH); Felicity Holton (FH); and Revd Jonathan Jennings (JPJ)	
3.	Minutes of the Meeting on 26th June 2024:	
a.	JGW proposed and JP seconded that the minutes be accepted as a true and accurate record of the Meeting. All in favour.	
b.	Matters Arising:	
	None to report.	
4.	Safeguarding:	
a.	Concerns - four referrals had been made.	
b.	<p><u>Safer Recruitment</u> – it was noted that outstanding actions were coming down.</p> <p><u>Training</u> – letters had gone out to all those whose basic or foundation training was still to be completed. A face-to-face training session was being offered in September if needed and it was the committee’s recommendation that if training was not completed by the end of September, then individuals should be asked to stand down from role until training was completed. Should there be extenuating circumstances then individuals had been asked to contact JP. After some discussion, JP proposed and LR seconded the proposal that should training not be complete by the end of September (unless otherwise noted by JP), then individuals be removed from role by team leaders and the safeguarding committee.</p> <p>FOR: 10 AGAINST: 0 ABSTENTION: 0 Proposal carried unanimously.</p> <p><u>Safeguarding Statements</u> – NW proposed and JP seconded the proposal that the diocesan ‘promoting a safer church’ statements be adopted.</p> <p>FOR: 11 AGAINST: 0 ABSTENTION: 0 Proposal carried unanimously</p> <p><u>PSO and Lead Recruiter</u> – Claire Banner and Ray Holton had volunteered to take on these respective roles. JP proposed and NG seconded the proposal that the PCC agree these appointments subject to appropriate training being completed.</p> <p>FOR: 11 AGAINST: 0 ABSTENTION: 0 Proposal carried unanimously.</p>	S/guarding cttee
5.	Church Overview:	
a.	<p><u>Attendance (services and groups)</u> - attendance at the 10:30 was still up on last year but there had been a slight decrease since March. There was some discussion about the reasons for this, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There being different congregations each week • Music still being an ongoing issue • Different atmospheres on different sides of the church • People will always come for different reasons and enjoy different things • We need to pray and ask God to add to our number <p>It was noted that the time spent together after the service was increasing indicating people were building relationship and comfortable being there. There was also a</p>	

	<p>suggestion that the measure should not necessarily be by service numbers but by other activities that were happening.</p> <p>In response to the question what could make the service better, suggestions included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breaking up the song sets • Make more people feel welcome (a good welcome was still a work in progress) • Ensuring the choir songs were known by the congregation • Boost the number and volume of the choir <p>It was agreed there was no magic formula as people attended for different reasons.</p>	
b.	<p>Pastoral Services – 57 pastoral services had been carried out in six months (versus 110 in total for 2023) and the expectation was that these would pick up in the second half of the year, particularly for funerals. It was noted that with JJ’s retirement after April 2025 the issue of resourcing would need to be looked into.</p> <p>Nine weddings were booked for 2025 and three for 2026 on the new package deal with the expectation that these would increase following the wedding fayre in September.</p>	
6.	Mission Strategy:	
i.	<p>Review Objective Pray More stage 1:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All church meetings to start and end in prayer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ This was being done 2. Have a short sermon series on prayer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ This was to start in September ➤ Diocesan produced prayer pack (£10) to be introduced into small groups (from September) 3. Ensure all areas of the church’s life are prayed for by including daily prayer points in the Day by Day booklet <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ This had been done 4. Increase the number of people leading Daily Prayer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ NW to work on this over the summer period <p>This was 50% completed - it was agreed that it was important to sustain those bits that had been done as prayer fuels church and it needed to be made central.</p>	
ii.	<p>Review Objective Putting Rainham First (held over from previous meeting):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete a churchyard survey identifying spaces 2. Complete the initial survey of the Eastern Crypt <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Both had been carried out and completed <p>The team were now working on updated plans which were required for a DAC meeting on 4/9/24 to provide initial feedback on the concept idea; it was hoped the response would be available for feedback at the September PCC meeting</p> <p>A biodiversity survey had been completed (paid for by a Kent Community Foundation grant) with various recommendations made, none of which required faculties. There was a full discussion and the following were agreed by PCC, noting that funding of these would be included within the grant received:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce a defined wildflower area, using raised beds/planters – this would ensure they wouldn’t get mown over and avoid growing over graves and the pathway • Introduce bird baths (concreted into the ground to prevent falling), a bug hotel, bird boxes (possibly including a swift box on the Millennium Centre), and a hedgehog box. <p>(FOR: 8 AGAINST: 1 ABSTENTION: 1)</p> <p>It was further agreed to look into ‘no mow May’ and/or leaving sections of the churchyard uncut or un-mowed from May to September – a decision on this was deferred until next year before the mowing season restarted.</p>	PRF cttee
iii.	<p>Review Objective Read More stage 1:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Encourage people to use the physical church bibles by directing them to it and providing them with the page number. From September, page numbers would be <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ From September, page numbers to be announced from the front by service leaders and made consistent across services 	Service leaders

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Page numbers to be put into the weekly news sheet <p>2. Encourage listening to or reading the Bible daily through the Daily Prayers online at St Margaret's or other resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ This was still to be done <p>3. Continue to have a specific small group that focuses on study the Bible for those who wish to delve deeper into the Bible text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Weekly Tuesday evening Bible Study to continue ➤ Reminders to be given about both Bible Study and small groups to encourage people to go along 	JP / Ana
iv.	<p>Review Objective Love More stage 1:</p> <p>1. Encourage meaningful conversations and dialogue between congregation members after the service outside of 'normal groupings', fostering community, fellowship and reducing potential divides.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ This was starting to happen more, All Age services encouraged chat within services and a 'get together' after a Sunday service had taken place with another being planned <p>2. Encourage members of the congregation to meet up outside of the church in public places to develop relationships.</p> <p>Review date set for two months' time, to be actioned by the Staff team.</p>	Staff Team
v.	<p>Review Objective Children Youth and Families stage 1:</p> <p>1. Safely recruit volunteers for 252Kids, XP3 and Family Friendly Coffee morning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Discussions were ongoing with people for Family Coffee Morning; no progress regarding leaders for 252Kids; and the focal leader for XP3 would no longer be available from late September 	
vi.	<p>Review Objective Environment stage 1:</p> <p>1. Increase membership of the Eco subcommittee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ One new person had joined <p>2. Undertake self-assessment against published criteria for the A Rocha and Green Flag Awards to help direct us towards carbon net zero and environmental sustainability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ This was being worked on for the Eco meeting in two weeks' time <p>3. Present gap analysis to the staff team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ October staff team meeting would look at this 	
vii.	<p>Review Objective Tafara Prayer Platform:</p> <p>1. Create a platform where prayer requests are cross-pollinated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Prayers for Tafara to be included in the weekly news sheet (NG to provide information to JP, who would advise Ana). These to then be included in our intercessions in church. <p>It was noted that the new priest was due to be inducted by the Bishop of Harare – NW was to provide recorded message to the church, and it was planned to play an excerpt from the induction service during Sunday morning's service.</p>	
7.	Finance:	
a.	<p><u>Position against budget, including unusual/unexpected expenditure:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TW reported that, taking into account money due from HMRC, Acts Six, and Parish income due from the tied income account, income was 4% below budget. However, expenditure was well within budget, so the net position was positive. • It was noted that SSE were yet to provide a gas bill for 2024 despite constant chasing – it was expected that this would be a significant amount which might require a repayment schedule to be set up, but overall would not change the assessment of the financial position. • There were some anomalies within the budget figures – a mistake had been made in calculating the salary cost and this should be £19,700 rather than £15,475 • The 'Licences' budget heading was showing £0 expenditure whereas significant spending had been made but wrongly posted into 'service costs' – this would be rectified. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The salary figure was higher than expected but this was due to funding of the Acts Six salary bill which was reimbursed monthly. <p>Other questions/comments were raised on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Comms' - reimbursement was due from Acts Six Volunteer training – cost of the safeguarding system was to be checked MC running costs – reimbursement was due from Acts Six 	
b.	<p>The Finance Committee had been tasked by PCC at the start of the year to look for an eco-friendly bank. After research, the Co-op Bank was the best choice on both financial and ethical grounds, although cash would need to be banked through the Post Office. TW proposed and NG seconded the proposal to change banks to the Co-op Bank and update the bank signatories at the same time (with DOB coming off and SH going on). FOR: 11 AGAINST: 0 ABSTENTION: 0 Proposals carried unanimously.</p> <p>Given the cash flow difficulties arising from church bills being paid monthly and income from Acts Six being paid quarterly, it was proposed by TW and seconded by DO that Acts Six be asked to pay rent monthly. FOR: 9 AGAINST: 0 ABSTENTION: 2 Proposal carried.</p>	<p>Finance Cttee</p> <p>Finance Cttee</p>
c.	<p>There was some discussion for the PRF project to have its own bank account given the funding that would be coming in; this would make the accounting system more robust and PRF monies more easily identifiable. The Finance Committee were asked to produce a proposal.</p> <p>Thanks were extended to DOB for attending the meeting and to the whole committee for their hard work.</p>	Finance Cttee
8.	Health and Safety:	
a.	<u>Checks</u> – NW was working with Martin Elmore over the summer to develop a system of checks. The report would be available for the September meeting.	
b.	<u>Accidents</u> – no accidents reported. There had been one incident with the new toilet door and someone had been locked inside due to a bent bolt. This had now been replaced by a lock on the inside only, however there was a concern that this should be openable from the outside for safety reasons. NW to talk to the maintenance team.	NW/ Mick P
9.	Maintenance:	
	NW had met with Mick Penney about forming this team. NW, Mick, Gary Williams and the Churchwardens to be art of the subcommittee.	
10.	Correspondence:	
	A letter had been received from the Diocese about donations to Archdeacon Andy's leaving gift. TW proposed and PH seconded the proposal that St Margaret's give £100 towards this. FOR: 11 AGAINST: 0 ABSTENTION: 0 Proposal carried.	DOB
11.	AOB:	
i.	<p><u>Heads of Terms re. Acts Six lease</u> - JGW confirmed that she had spoken to the solicitors, received advice from the surveyors and spoken with two Acts Six directors about the proposed changes to the Heads of Agreement between PCC and Acts Six. There were five changes proposed relating to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Six-month rent-free period for 2025 A rolling three-month break clause Acts Six to be liable for internal repairs only, with PCC picking up any external repairs Replication of conditions in head lease and sub leases Rent to be paid monthly rather than quarterly <p>There was a full discussion and PCC voted in relation to each item.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Rent free period - The PCC were sympathetic to the request but without knowing if there was to be any payment from Acts Six at the end of the year, (and if so how much this might be), were concerned where the funds would come from to pay for this. Finance Committee recommended an agreement be reached where PCC would commit to pay a pre-determined percentage of any payment to them by Acts Six, up to the equivalent amount of 6 months 2024 rent (£17.5k). Whilst the PCC were in full agreement with the Finance Committee proposal, it was unanimously 	

	<p>agreed that JGW would verify the legality of this with the accountants and solicitors and continue to negotiate with Acts Six.</p> <p>2. Break Clause – this was agreed unanimously subject to the principal tenant having at least the same level of commitment in their lease.</p> <p>3. Repair liability – Agreed.</p> <p>4. Lease conditions – this was agreed unanimously subject to sub leases not having a tenant only break clause.</p> <p>5. Payment of monthly rent – this was agreed unanimously.</p>	JGW
ii.	<p><u>Bibles for School</u> – NW suggested that the Church again provide Bibles to all new students at St Margaret’s Junior School. There was a small pot of money left from last year’s contributions towards this and it was proposed to ask the congregation to donate again. Any potential exposure would be £1.3k (to come from the training budget). All in favour.</p>	NW
12.	Dates of Next Meeting:	
	<p>Thursday at 19:30 in Church on:</p> <p>26th September</p> <p>24th October</p> <p>28th November</p>	
13.	Closing Act of Worship:	
	The meeting concluded at 21:58 with the final part of evening prayer.	