

**ST MARY'S CHURCH, HADLOW**

**STANDING COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of Meeting held Monday 22 February 2021**

8pm via Zoom

**1. Opening prayer**

The meeting began with welcome and prayer.

**2. Members present**

Rev. Paul White (PW), (NC), John Speed (JS), Jenny Hopkins (JH), Martin Massy (MM, Secretary)

**Apologies for absence:** Michael Payne (MP)

**3. Reopening**

PW proposed in-person worship could restart from Easter Sunday, 4 April. The Prime Minister had outline stages for easing restrictions, with the first stage completing 29 March. It therefore seemed appropriate to start after that. Reopening during Holy Week was felt to be not feasible owing to arrangements requiring intervals of at least 72 hours between services.

It was proposed and agreed that Easter Sunday should be ticketed, with tickets offered first to those who do not join the live-streamed services. PW to contact SC members to suggest names. Current restrictions on social distancing, limited numbers (40), hand sanitising, registration, no singing, etc. would continue. Services after Easter proposed to be on 'first come, first served' basis, still with limited numbers.

The Standing Committee agreed to make a strong recommendation to the full PCC for restarting in-person worship on Easter Sunday. MM to send resolution to PCC members for approval (post-meeting note: passed unanimously).

We have two roving microphones. We should use both to avoid possibility of cross-contamination between reader and intercessor. Apparently one mic not working properly – MM to investigate.

How to mark Mothering Sunday and Palm Sunday – would it be possible to make and take posies to the primary school for Mothering Sunday, and find a way of distributing palm crosses for Palm Sunday? Instructions on how to make a palm cross could be put on the website. PW to progress.

**4. Finance**

Currently working on the 2020 accounts, to be reviewed and validated by the Independent Examiner and circulated to PCC ahead of the March meeting for approval.

£3,271 net cash flow surplus in 2021 to the end of February included a very generous contribution of £3,000 from an anonymous donor. Members asked MM to pass on their grateful thanks. Restricted income £320 for the Delhi Brotherhood Society and £1,085 for the Food Bank, including another donation from Tonbridge Rotary Club, of £270.

MM raised the question of remuneration for the independent examination of the annual report and accounts. The fee was not increased last year and MM felt it would be fair to increase the fee by the rate of inflation, which would make it £730 – still much less than would be charged by an accountancy firm, but helpful in ensuring the IE's willingness to continue. Members agreed that the fee should be increased to £730.

MM had raised a query with a Charity Commission concerning the conflict of interest inherent in Mrs.Massy’s role as Trustee and paid Parish Administrator. The Commission responded that since she was “employed before becoming a trustee then the payment is not a benefit arising from the trusteeship. Conflicts of interest after the trusteeship starts must be managed.” The PCC must recognise the conflict of interest, and should manage it by ensuring that neither Mr. nor Mrs.Massy is involved in setting remuneration.

**5. Stewardship**

A meeting of the Finance Committee and other interested parties took place on 9 February. One of the conclusions had been to create a Stewardship sub-committee, drawing its membership from PCC sub-committees and other interested people. On further reflection, the committee agreed that the role of such a committee would overlap with the PCC itself. “Stewardship” should be a proper function of the full PCC, but should be covered separately from the usual business of the bi-monthly meetings – the scope is wide-ranging and there is not enough time in a normal meeting. Stewardship in the narrower financial sense would continue to be part of the role of the Finance Committee.

A Stewardship campaign is needed as contributions have fallen below a sustainable level – the PCC’s offer to the diocese for 2021 is below the cost of ministry. The APCM could draw people’s attention briefly to, for example, the use of Standing Orders, reviewing giving, wills/legacies.

**6. World Mission**

The World Mission Committee does not have a convenor at present – membership and role to be discussed at PCC after the APCM.

**7. APCM**

It was noted that people asked to join the PCC should be made aware of the expectation (not a requirement) that they should join one or more sub-committees. In the past it had often come as a surprise when people were asked at PCC meeting which sub-committee they would like to join.

Signature .....

Date: .....

**Date of next full PCC meeting 15 March 2021**