

ST MARY'S CHURCH, HADLOW
PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Minutes of the PCC Meeting held on Monday 20 September 2021

7.30pm via Zoom

1. Opening prayer

Rev'd Paul welcomed everyone, and the meeting began with prayer.

2. Members present

Rev'd Paul White (PW, Chair); Cathy Brill (CB); (NC); Melissa Crawshay-Williams (MW); Kirsty Finch (KF); Jenny Hopkins (JH); Lee Kirk (LK); Janice Massy (JM), Martin Massy (MM); Katerina Plucknett-Nixon (KN); Kelly Parsons (KP); Michael Payne (MP); Lisa Porritt (LP); John Speed (JS); Barry Wheeler (BW), Greg Barry (GB)

Apologies for absence: Mike Harvey

3. Approval of the Minutes of: 19 July approved – MM thanked MW for taking the Minutes.

4. Matters arising (not otherwise covered by the Agenda)

Sunday morning coffee after the service/Saturday morning monthly coffees – PW said there were no official restrictions so it could start happening if people wanted, provided the cleaning happens. JH expressed an interest in the monthly coffees. JM said she could do Saturday coffee downstairs and would get it going this month and would get a rota for the new year.

Cream tea for people on their own on a Sunday afternoon – JH is interested in setting this up for 3.30-5pm on the first Sunday in the month. LK said that cleaning needed to be done before, particularly touch points after the 10 o'clock service, and this should be borne in mind and suggested having tea outside. PW said that seating could be difficult outside for the old and vulnerable. MP suggested holding the cream teas upstairs in the afternoon, but access is more difficult. PW asked whether JH was taking on too much with her other volunteering roles. JH assured everyone that she had capacity for this and had helpers.

5. Safeguarding

GB is an ex-policeman and the lead safeguarding officer in the diocese. The team advises and supports on policy and will work with anyone on an allegation issue. Safeguarding is wider than children; it includes vulnerable adults and domestic abuse. The team are all available to help and have developed a good network of safeguarding officer meetings. CB is our Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO).

The team will take responsibility to brief the new incumbent. PW asked if there were any greater risks during an interregnum. GB did not believe there was a greater risk. PW asked about cover for clergy covering services. GB recommended calling the Bishop's office to check if they are licensed – they should all have a letter from the Archbishop. MP asked about retired clergy and whether the DBS system still held. GB said that retired clergy need permission to officiate.

PCC members need to do the foundation course, not the leadership course. There is a safe recruitment course and from 1st November a domestic abuse course. There is a requirement that the PCC should be up to date on safeguarding issues. All church officers (anyone who volunteers) should undertake the basic awareness course.

MM asked about safeguarding in relation to recruitment and who it applied to (e.g., helping with coffee?). GB said that this only apply to people dealing with children or vulnerable adults for a

substantial amount of time (the “shop-keeper test”, e.g., not people helping with coffee). The principles of safer recruitment are: to review, train, support, good monitoring, thanking, two way feedback and induction. Monitoring during a probationary period and review (support and thanks) and training are most important. The safer recruitment guidance and process is not retrospective. There should be a Responsible Person for each role/team/person.

NC asked about the food bank and whether the safeguarding team could help with needs of vulnerable adults. GB said that they will help as much as they can.

PW asked about requirements for children’s groups. GB said all people working with children will need to be safely recruited and need training. PW asked about teams of volunteers and to what extent do you need a formal recruitment process. GB said only new people need training.

MM asked to what extent we are responsible for issues outside the church. GB said there was no responsibility for outside the church. However, if there are children or urgent situation involved the safeguarding team should be involved for advice and support. MP asked what sort of protection people with home visits would have. GB acknowledged that lone working and keeping people safe was a big issue – the team is working on good practice guidance to help people. The team leader should be made aware of people’s movements in order to keep track of safety when home visiting.

CB said her role as PSO is a huge responsibility and thanked GB for his common-sense advice. She said several people needed training, and it would be good to do training in groups. GB suggested spreading the load; the church could have several PSOs. PW thanked GB for his talk and CB for her role.

CB asked whether someone might consider acting as Lead Recruiter to oversee recruitment in different groups. Action: to be discussed at a future PCC. JS asked about job description. CB will draw up a job specification.

6. PCC

Membership changes

Steve and Val Newell have resigned from the PCC. NC and KP have been co-opted to the PCC and were approved; they will be listed with the Charity Commission as trustees.

Parish Vision Day deferral

PW had received advice that this should be deferred.

PCC Vice Chair

PW suggested that both churchwardens (MP and JS) be appointed as Vice Chairmen during the interregnum. Both were elected unanimously as Vice Chairs for the PCC.

Nomination for the Standing Committee

NC volunteered and everyone agreed.

7. Treasurer’s report

MM noted surplus of income over expenditure of £12,600 for the year to date. There was greater income from regular giving and several generous donations and two weddings in July.

NC asked that if the parish share weren’t paid in full, would the church not receive a full-time replacement. PW advised that the diocese is not likely to be swayed by a temporary holding-back from the parish share. PW said Archdeacon Andy can be asked this question at the next PCC meeting on 23 November. MM noted that we need to review our reserves policy and how much should be held. MM

suggested discussing this in November. PW said that Hadlow is paying pretty well compared to other parishes. He suggested support for the Stewardship campaign from 24th October.

8. Sub-committee reports:

Education

CB reported that Messy Church went well; the next one will be on 17th October. KP said that resources will be provided and toys on a table for the children and this will be monitored over time.

Fabric

MM update: CES lighting company will visit the church at the end of October and if anyone else wants to attend please contact him. RH: Erco light fitting manufacturer will also be coming in.

Outreach & Fundraising

CB: Coffee Pots & Tiny Tots (CPTT) will be restarted on 6th October for families.

JM: first committee meeting on Wednesday to discuss plans. Scarecrow is the first one, opera evening in October, concert in November/December, East Peckham silver band in 2022.

Scarecrow trail: KF said that there would be 17 scarecrows.

Hire of Church Upper Room: LK said that East Peckham is £12.50/hour to hire, in Hadlow it is £7.50/hour. NC thought the singing group on a Thursday could be a positive influence and supported their booking. NC asked about cost of heating and whether this could be used as rationale for increasing the cost of hire. A number of PCC members believed any increase should be deferred to the end of the year. MM asked whether there should be a set fee for hire of the body of the church. RH believed there should be flexibility and there should be guidelines rather than a fixed price. JM said that there have been relationships with some groups such as Hadlow Orchestra who give a donation, and supported flexibility. However, for outside groups wondered how much it should be. RH asked how much others charged. JM said that requests for holding concerts have not always been accepted as this can prevent other church interest events. PW agreed there should be a process for approving hire terms.

9. Worship

PW said the rules have not changed substantially. None of the guidance is compulsory; it is voluntary. He asked how people felt about mask wearing, signing in, and whether current restrictions should be eased. JS reported that there had not been complaints about the current handling.

JS suggested moving the carpets for CPTT from the Upper Room to their usual position against the nave wall. MP was hesitant about moving carpets to the nave as it could be a trip hazard and believed people were comfortable as they are now. PW asked about carpets for Tiny Tots. CB said they weren't essential, but it was pleasant for children to sit on a carpet rather than a cold floor. PW suggested having them unrolled and left in situ. CB said it was important to be aware of a trip hazard and should not be permanently down. She believed that a carpet was not a priority. JM suggested having the carpet nearby ready to unroll. CB suggested considering new lighter carpets.

Masks: PW is happy to suggest that people can remove masks for singing. NC said that she felt cautious and preferred to wear masks and suggested giving people an option of one side of the nave being for mask wearers and the other side for non-mask wearers. PW asked whether we should signal a relaxation of the rules, or keep things the same. KF and JH were in favour of a relaxation. LK believed that numbers could go back up so advocated staying as we are now and CB agreed we should keep the masks. BW agreed with CB. JM suggested keeping the masks but asked about bringing down the chairs from the Upper Room. RH believed in relaxing the guidance later after a month or two. PW agreed to keep the guidelines as they are and to reconsider at the Standing Committee. PW wanted a full service without Zoom for his leaving service.

10. Correspondence

None to report.

11. Any other business

Kneelers

JS discovered some old blue kneelers and wanted permission to dispose of them. PCC agreed. PW suggested seeking permission from Archdeacon Andy.

12. Dates of next PCC meetings:

Standing Committee Monday, 18 October

Full PCC Tuesday, 23 November

The meeting closed with prayer.

Signature

Date: