

Present – Revd Hugh Ellis (HE), Revd Jackie Lock (JLk), Revd Gareth Morley (GM), Derek Lancaster (DL), Jennifer Cartledge (Churchwarden) (JC), Lis Burns (Churchwarden) (LB), Robyn Connelly (RC), John Lord (Treasurer) (JLd), Barry Titchen (BT), Dawn Segrue (DS), Lauren Harvey (LH), Lynda Moorcroft (LM), Michelle Neudecker (MN), Sheila Doig (SD), Ray Levy (RL), Thistle Martin (TM)

1. Welcome from Chairperson

Hugh welcomed everyone and Jackie led the opening prayer.

2. Apologies / Did not attend

David Knights (DK)*, Estelle Williams (EW), Nick Cousins (NC)*, Meg Vockins (MV)
*(*Owing to attendance at Deanery Synod.)*

3. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the PCC Meeting that was held on the 18th November 2020 were approved, without amendment and signed.

4. Matters Arising from Minutes

There were no matters arising.

It was noted that there were no Community Matters to be raised under Section 15 of the Agenda.

5. Report on the outcome of consultation on the resolution not to hold services in Church on 27th December 2020

PH reported that following the circulation of the proposed resolution not to hold services in Church on 27th December 2020, nine responses had been received these included no objections.

6. In-person worship: PCC Resolution regarding suspension of Sunday Public Worship

Members of the PCC were reminded that if Sunday worship has to be suspended because of the Covid pandemic, beyond three or four Sundays, it is necessary for the PCC to pass an appropriate resolution setting out the period of suspension. Furthermore, such resolution needs to be reported to the Area Bishop and a suitable notice posted on the Church noticeboard.

Following discussion, it was unanimously agreed in principle, that Sunday in-Person worship would be suspended from 7th February to the 7th March 2021 inclusive.

PH was requested to prepare and circulate a suitable resolution, which was to be proposed by JC and seconded by LB, for members to approve or otherwise, and then to report the outcome to HE in such a manner that it could be relayed to Bishop Alan. Furthermore, PH was also requested to report the outcome of the responses to the resolution at the next PCC meeting.

It was noted that this in principle decision was based upon advice received from the Diocese, most recently on the 8th January 2021 and ongoing updates from Buckinghamshire Council Public Health.

It was agreed that the situation would be kept under regular review and it may be necessary to extend this period of suspension if the situation demands.

In response to a question from RL about the resumption of Private Prayer, HE confirmed that it would be dealt with elsewhere in the agenda.

Action: PH to draft and circulate a resolution reflecting the above decision and then report the outcome initially to HE (with a draft notification for Bishop Alan) and then to PCC at the next meeting.

Team Reports

7. Stewardship & Finance

Overall Financial Status

JLd presented a summary of the 2020 draft accounts as well as referring to the minutes of the recent Stewardship and Finance Group meeting that had been published in advance of the PCC meeting.

Regular Income for the year at £226,443, showed an adverse variance of £23,756 against budget. Regular giving was down by around £14,600 and income from the cafe, events and lettings was approximately £22,200 below budget. However donations and support were up by around £4,500 and the government JRS grant (for furloughed staff) of £8,500 had all contributed to improving the outturn, which at one point during the year was expected to be around £33,500 below budget.

Turning to regular expenditure, overall expenditure was around £22,467 lower than the budget owing to lower costs having been expended in relation to music, events and mission, although expenditure on maintenance had been higher than expected in connection with both the church and housing.

When taken together the net outturn position for the year was a deficit of £1,290, which was a considerably better position than had been expected and had resulted in only very limited resort to reserves.

JLd went on to highlight a few other points in connection with the accounts:

- Provision has been made within the accounts for charitable donations which still have to be decided.
- The maintenance costs, particularly the electrical test and inspection in the church had been accrued for, despite not having been completed by the end of December, because the commitment had been made during 2020.
- Generous responses to the Christmas Tree festival and the sale of the Cookbook had helped reduce the deficit.
- A £10,000 legacy had been received for the organ refurbishment. Because these are restricted funds they could not be set against the reported deficit; however, if they had been taken into account, the net outturn position would have shown a favourable variance of approximately £8,700. Nevertheless, these funds had improved the end of year cash position.
- JLd confirmed that limited funds had been withdrawn from the Hardship Fund to support beneficiaries that had suffered through furlough.
- It would be of great importance to understand the implications of the forthcoming Quinquennial Report as soon as possible, as this could represent a significant financial commitment in 2021.

JLd concluded by highlighting the reported figures were still draft and may be subject to change depending upon the revaluation of certain assets, finalising end of year adjustments and the outcome of the independent examination.

All Saints Gift Day 2020

JLd reported that so far, the total financial impact of the All-Saints Gift Day, was £15,031 of planned giving, over 12 months. 31 responses had been received and, despite the request having been re-sent, the responses received represent only approximately 59% of those received in both 2018 and 2019.

The total financial impact is made up of Planned Giving income of £160.00/month or £1,920 per annum plus Gift Aid of £294 which, when combined represent 43% of the 2019 position. 'One-off' gifts totalling £11,220 plus £1,597 Gift Aid which combined to represent 116% of the 2019 position; this is in addition to some other continued support.

Shawbrook Interest Bearing Account

PH reported that, following the circulation of the proposed resolution on 21st January 2021 to open a 60-day interest bearing account with Shawbrook Bank, eighteen responses had been received and these included no objections.

Vote of Thanks to the Stewardship and Finance Group

HE concluded this section by recording his thanks and those of the other members of the PCC to the members of the Stewardship and Finance Group for their hard work and diligence throughout the year and for managing the church's finances so effectively during this extremely difficult and uncertain period.

8. Building & Fabric

Church: JC reported the Fabric group had recently met on-line and referred to the minutes that had been circulated prior to the meeting. She went on to confirm that the Quinquennial Inspection Report, which had been expected by the end of January 2021, was now due to be delivered in early February.

JC went on to confirm ongoing work in connection with Fabric included the Electrical Testing and Inspection work that was due to be complete by the end of January and repairs to the windows in the Lady Chapel and North Aisle.

In response to comments made by JLD under item 7, JC confirmed that once received, the recommendations contained in the Quinquennial Report would be costed in order to provide a forecast, with other fabric related projects and initiatives.

7 Totteridge Road: JC reported that transfer of titles has been signed and were expected to be exchanged shortly, the property questionnaires had been completed and submitted, and completion of the transaction was imminently. JC also reported that the final loose fittings and effects had now been removed from the property is empty.

JC concluded by noting that the next focus would be the identification and selection of a suitable replacement property and a group (including TM and BT) was being formed to progress this.

9. Worship & Liturgy

DL commented on the following worship and liturgical matters:

- The Christmas services had proceeded as planned and were understood to have been well received.
- The reactions to the memorial tree and various outside activities were also received very positively.
- Since Christmas, the on-line Sunday worship at 10:00am and 5:00pm have had good attendances, although DL expressed a natural concern about those who are not attending or may otherwise be 'missing'.
- The Holy Week and Easter plans are yet to be finalised.
- An on-line service will take place on Ash Wednesday.

DL requested feedback from the PCC about the current on-line worship provision, particularly any views on what, if anything, can be done to improve it and make it more attractive to participants and others.

DL concluded by thanking BT for his continued hard work in relation to the provision of technical support. He also announced that, following his request in November, two additional volunteers had come forward to supplement the technical support team.

10. Mission & Evangelism

GM began by referencing the report that had been published in advance of the meeting and seeking any questions or comments, of which there were none.

GM closed by affirming that outreach continues to be a primary object.

11. Children & Families

RC began by commenting upon Christmas which she observed was of, course different, but despite this had seen positive engagement in several areas and events. These included Hamilton School, the Church of England School and the Royal Grammar school having pre-recorded their Christmas services in the Church. Wycombe High Schools and Godstowe had also conducted on-line services, but not from the church.

RC praised the work of the Church Activities team and GM in enabling these Christmas services in church to go ahead.

In addition, Christmas celebration had been able to continue in the churchyard and elsewhere including the 'Muddy Christingle', which had been attended by 78 people and resulted in a donation of £100 to the Children's Society, and the Crib Service that had been held on Zoom. Both of these events had been well received.

As regards the current situation and looking forward, Small Saints is continuing and the 'All Age' services are taking place once a month, both of which are on-line.

RC concluded by saying that the next date for Ark will be after half-term.

HE thanked RC for the continued work that was being done in this important area of our mission.

12. Pastoral

JLk reported that whilst there were no new initiatives to announce, pastoral support was continuing to be successfully provided to those in need.

13. Education & Discipleship

HE remarked that as the matters relating to education and discipleship are being dealt with under other topics, most notably Children and Families and Mission and Evangelism, there is no separate report, although this situation will be kept under constant review.

14. Communications

LB noted that the communications continue to be substantially based on electronic media including the website, Facebook and others forms, although the noticeboard outside is continuing to be of considerable value and use.

LB also asked for help from anyone that used Instagram as we currently do not have anyone who is maintaining this communications channel.

LB raised the question of when Lenten messages would be available for publications which was dealt with under item 21 below.

15. Allocation of Charitable Funds

GM reported that he was bringing together a group of 5-6 people to start considering the allocation of charitable funds in more detail. The current intention was to identify one international, two national and two local charities on which to focus our attention.

Having identified these charities it was intended to invite speakers from each to present the work of the charities over the course of the year to the congregation, either 'in person' or on-line.

GM went on to comment about the allocation of outstanding charitable donations from 2020, which has been discussed with Jld and it is currently proposed that £2,000 would be donated to Wycombe Homeless and £500 to the Church Urban Fund. Any remaining funds would be donated to charities focussed on child poverty or food poverty.

Jld confirmed that separate funds are maintained for The Rehema Project in Tanzania and specifically for supporting the study costs of Eva, to complete her two year secretarial course. LM reported that following an update from Heather Johnstone (our CMS Partner) last November, there now appears to be an additional requirement from the Tanzanian Government for students, such as Eva, to complete a three month internship at the end of their courses (which can be paid or unpaid). This may result in additional sponsorship being required for Eva, perhaps up to March or April of this year. An update from Heather is awaited which will inform our next steps.

In response to a question as to whether any particular charity had been selected for 'Lenten Giving' GM suggested that any donations should be given directly to the Church for ongoing distribution, which was consistent with what has been done in the past.

HE remarked that he was pleased this important matter area was now receiving more energy and focus, which was a very positive development.

Jld noted that charitable giving by the church has always been factored into our budgetted expenditure of £6,300 per annum.

16. Church Wardens' Report

LB and JC reported that aside from two issues noted below, matters from the Churchwardens had been reported elsewhere in the agenda.

Philip Hynard Professional Appointment

JC requested approval to execute an appointment with Philip Hynard for him to participate as a member of the Fabric Committee, which was needed in order to satisfy the requirements of his Professional Indemnity Insurers, which was in turn necessitated by his professional body, the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. The three year appointment, which was on similar terms to the one that had previously been executed. The total fee for the appointment was £1.00 and the total liability under the appointment was £10.00.

The proposal was seconded by LB and approved unanimously.

Welcoming

LB and JC invited PCC members and other to join the Welcoming rota and will include an invitation in News.

In response to this LH offered to join the welcoming rota on Sundays.

In response to questions from RL and others about the Church opening again for Private Prayer, JC highlighted the challenges of re-starting this, particularly on weekdays, until Penny Justice and Louise Simmons are able to satisfactorily address their respective childcare issues, which practically means after the schools have re-opened.

SD remarked that she would be willing to Welcome for Private Prayer on Saturdays, as she has regularly done in the past. HE said that a decision would be made on the resumption of private prayer in due course.

JLk commented that whilst the vaccination programme will aid the resumption of this, we will need to continue to be vigilant about local infection rates until the vaccination programme has been 'rolled-out' more widely to other age groups and vulnerable people.

17. Oakley Hall report

TM referred to the reports that were circulated in advance of the meeting and asked if there were any questions. Any on the finance report should be referred to Alison Adamson via the church office. There were no questions raised in the meeting.

18. Safeguarding

JLk reported that a meeting had taken place earlier in the week and no urgent issues had emerged. She went on to remind all members of the PCC who had not already done so to complete the 'Basic' Safeguarding course, which can be completed on-line, the details of which would be issued to PH shortly, for circulation to all members. Upon completion of the training, the training certificate would need to be downloaded and sent to TM in the Office to maintain our records. Everyone was asked to complete this by the end of February 2021.

LB asked when the Safeguarding Policy would be updated and JLk confirmed the intention to complete this by the time that the Church is re-opened - currently planned for 14th March 2021.

Actions:

JLk to provide information on training portal to PH for circulation to all PCC Members.

All PCC members, who have not done already, to complete the Basic Safeguarding Training and send their Training Certificates to TM at the Office by 28th February 2021.

JLk to arrange for the Safeguarding Policy to be updated by 14th March 2021.

19. Church Management

iKnow Church

GM reminded everyone that iKnow Church is essentially a specialist contact management system that is tailored for use in an ecclesiastical environment.

He went on to highlight certain features, including the following:

- Different levels / types of access were available to suit the needs of the users, depending upon their requirements.

- An effective means of managing teams and rotas – for example for intercessions.
- The Management and organisation of Housegroups.
- Podcasts.
- Monitor attendance at various types of event including:
 - Services.
 - Private Prayer.
 - Mustard seed Café.
- A robust booking system to aid the management of events to support the church calendar.
- The ability to record 'Life Events', such as baptisms, confirmation, marriages and deaths, when it can also be used to capture all of the necessary data and, where appropriate, pricing and correspondence, for example with undertakers.

HE concluded by highlighting the question that now faces us, particularly those in organisational leadership roles, is how the system can best be used to serve our needs?

GM responded to various questions that were posed, including:

- In response to a question from SD - rotas that have been set up can be amended, but this must be done by the person who has set them up – for example Mark Johnson in the case of intercessions.
- In response to a question from BT about how to gaining access to the system to undertake statistical analysis purposes, GM said contact him and TM and he extended this request to anyone else on the PCC who required access to the system.
- In response to a question from TM, GM will provide an active user list.

JLk noted that there were no charges for baptisms.

Cloud Storage / Office 365

GM introduced this topic by reference his report that had been circulated prior to the meeting. Microsoft is currently offering Office 365 to not-for-profit organisations and this software package includes an on-line cloud storage facility 'OneDrive', that offers good security, password protection and facilitates individuals and groups to work collaboratively. GM noted that he and HE were currently using it to manage his curacy journey.

This system would provide a good tool for the storage of important shared documents such as the agendas and minutes of PCC meetings and information required to manage activities within the church. This would complement the facilities within iKnow Church.

TM noted that this system is currently used in the Church Office and it proves effective.

LM questioned what 'Business Class' email was and GM noted that Office 365 offers several business applications including a robust email client, but at this stage it was only intended to use the cloud storage component of this system.

DS observed that she has experience of Office 365 and confirmed how good the system was.

To take this forward an application needs to be made on behalf of the Church, which PH offered to undertake.

Action: PH to draft application form to Microsoft and discuss with GM prior to submission.

20. Fundraising

HE opened the floor to fundraising suggestions from all members but highlighted the need to ensure that, whilst raising funds is the core object the events, they also need to be fun and have wide appeal.

The following suggestions were put forward:

RL – 'Teddy Bear Jump' from the church tower to the churchyard and participants would each earn a certificate for having successfully completed the journey.

It was noted by JC that our ability to do this this may be dependent upon the outcome of the Quinquennial Report concerning tower access, choosing a time to avoid the peregrine falcon breeding season and liaison with the bell ringers.

DL – Tapping into the array of on-line concerts that are being offered by the Royal Colleges and others and suggested consultation with Julian Brockless.

LB – Proposed virtual ballooning but requested that if this was to be considered it should not take place in either January or February.

LM – Questioned whether something along the lines of a virtual games night initiative that is currently offered by MacMillan Cancer Support and this includes an escape room. LM will explore this and see if there is an ability to develop one of our own.

SD – A treasure hunt based up things that people see on their walks. DS also questioned whether this could be developed in such a way as to appeal to children.

MN – Planting spring bulbs and / or a spring themed quiz night.

HE – On-line games' night.

GM - Zoom bingo (although being mindful and sensitive to gambling laws) or Zoom karaoke.

SD and DS – offered to work with RC to develop ideas that would be appropriate for children and younger members of the congregation.

Another suggestion was a virtual tour of the church, identifying key historical events and features and it was suggested that David Snoxell may be interested in progressing this, although there would be a need for support on filming.

LB noted that whatever was suggested the concept should be kept as simple as possible and we should remain vigilant as to how over-complicated technology can be a hindrance and has the potential to spoil events of this nature.

LB also noted that it was important to keep a mix of times of day and days of the week, because this may make it more accessible to a wider group of participants.

There followed a discussion as to how best to use technology to aid the planning and scheduling of fundraising events and whether iKnow Church would be suitable for this, although no conclusion was reached. It was observed that to do this everyone on the PCC should have access to the iKnow Church system.

HE praised the ingenuity and enthusiasm with which interesting fundraising suggestions had been put forward, but noted the next important step was for someone to take the lead on each initiative, to move it forward.

Action: Those who recommended a fundraising idea to contact the Church Office and book a date for their activity and send details to LB for online advertising communications.

21. Lent

HE introduced the Lent programme with a presentation describing a series of on-line engagement groups, all of which are to be intergenerational, as far as possible.

Each group will be led by a member of the MLT and the topics will be inspired by the following:

- Come and See from the Oxford Diocese
- Follow Me: Explore the fruits of the Spirit
- Live Lent God's Story Our Story based on the Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent book for 2021, Living His Story by Hannah Steele
- For such a time as this - climate change, ecological injustice and inequality

The sessions will take place on different days and times during the week so that as many people as possible can access a group that interests them.

HE highlighted that a key to the success of this programme would be to publicise them on digital media to encourage a wide range of people both from within and outside our regular congregation to participate. GM undertook to provide this information to TM and LB by the morning of 5th February, to ensure that initial information could be included in News.

HE recommended that the leaders of each of these groups should record a short message for inclusion in services over the next two weeks or so, explaining the relevance of their topic so as to encourage participation.

Action: GM to provide information to TM and LB by the morning of 5th February to ensure that initial information can be included in News.

There followed a further discussion in relation to other Lenten activities and the following questions / observations were made:

- Could we see what activities could take place outdoors?

- Could we do something similar to the memorial Christmas tree, perhaps related to deaths from Covid?
- Is there a possibility of erecting a cross in the churchyard?

22. Community Matters

None

23. Any Other Business

None

24. Meeting Ends

The meeting ended at 21:21 with the prayers and a blessing.

Next meeting dates:

- SLT Strategy – Wednesday 3rd February 2021
- SLT Standing Committee – Wednesday 5th May 2021.
- PCC – Wednesday - 19th May 2021

HSJ ell *24/5/21*