

Present – Revd Jackie Lock (JLk), Derek Lancaster LLM (DL), Robyn Connelly (RC) (Children’s Minister), Jenny Cartledge (JC) (Chair and Churchwarden), Edgar Samuel (Deputy Honorary Churchwarden) (ES), John Lord (Treasurer) (JLd), Jacqui Brearley (JB), Sheila Doig (SD), Mark Johnson (MJ), Jean Johnson (JJ), Ray Levy (DSy Rep), Sue Lord (DSy Rep) (SL), Elizabeth Martin (EM), Lynda Titchen Moorcroft (LM), Philip Hynard (Secretary) (PH).

Welcome from Chairperson.

JC welcomed everyone and invited JLk to lead Evening Prayers who, in turn, invited everyone to silently offer one talent/skill they could bring to the PCC this year whilst adding a lit tealight to the candle stand.

1. Apologies/Did not attend

Revd Gareth Morley (GM), Lis Burns (Churchwarden) (LB), Barry Titchen (DSy Rep and Deputy Treasurer) (BT), Barbara Bowman (BB), Lauren Harvey (LH), Dawn Segrue (DS).

Extra Item **Co-option of Sue Lord to the Deanery Synod**

JC announced that Sue Lord had offered to become a Deanery Synod Representative. PH explained that as a full appointment to the Deanery Synod could only take place at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting this position would need to be filled on a co-option basis, with the intention of a full appointment taking place at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting, scheduled for 28th April 2024. On this basis, Sue’s candidacy was proposed by EM, seconded by PH and supported unanimously.

2. The role and responsibility of members of the PCC

JC welcomed SL and JB as new members of the PCC and then reminded everyone of key aspects of the role and the responsibilities they need to fulfil, which are as follows:

- Cooperation with the minister to promote in the parish, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.
- Leading discussion with the Church of England on matters relating to worship but not on doctrine.
- Exercising its voice in the forms of services used by the church and to may make representations to the bishop and deanery synod on matters affecting the welfare and pastoral care of the parish.
- The financial affairs of the church and the care and maintenance of the church fabric and its contents, the maintenance of the electoral roll.
- Ensuring appropriate safeguarding measures are in place, regularly reviewed and updated, as necessary.

3. Vacancy Update

DL reminded everyone that the deadline for applications for the role of Team Rector was 1st June and, as far as was known, no applications had been received at the date of the meeting. DL will provide an update after the closing date.

DL then went on to confirm that depending up the number of applications, shortlisting would be complete by 5th June with meetings and interviews to follow later in the month.

PH confirmed that work to the Vicarage seems to be progressing, albeit slowly.

4. South Porch

JC referred to a report, prepared by the DAC following a visit and inspection of the proposed work to the Churchyard and the South Porch, which had been published in advance of the meeting. Attached to this report was an email from LB to the DAC, correcting some of the comments that had been made concerning the South Porch, upon which no further response from the DAC had been received.

Whilst there were no questions or comments, JC underlined the importance of moving this work forward and indicated that some suggestions had been made by the DAC as to possible alternative sources of grant / funding, which are to be followed up.

5. SLS Community Questionnaire

LM introduced the feedback from the Community Questionnaire, the results of which had been summarized and published in advance of the meeting, highlighting the following:

- Some very positive comments had been received.
- Actions are already being taken to address some of the more negative comments.
- There are some issues which can be addressed by some steps in the short term, some of which are highlighted below from the subsequent discussions that followed.
- Once implemented, a number of features contemplated within both the SLS and Churchyard projects will address some of the other less positive comments.

In summary:

- A number of helpful comments were gathered, which entirely justified the effort expended.
- One common theme is a need for more people to become engaged in order to move some of these initiatives forward.
- More ASHW social gatherings would be helpful to encourage a sense of belonging.
- Could we allocate a community group or mission partner to each PCC member?
- Similarly, could we allocate a ministry team member to be a named link who could attend meetings, relevant events/services etc.
- We should not forget that some negative perceptions / responses were gleaned including:
 - A perception that whilst the Church dominates the town centre, it somehow feels isolated from it, as though there is invisible barrier around it.
 - People do not know what we do or stand for.

From this, the following three actions were agreed:

- Each PCC member needs to approach one congregation member, to find out what they can offer and how they can help.
- A plan will be put in place to ensure that a nominated member of the PCC will be responsible for liaising with each of our key local stakeholders.
- There would be benefit in exploring and developing the chaplaincy aspect of the role of welcomers, including providing additional training and support, where required.

6. Diocesan Synod Report

JC referred to a report prepared by BT, published in advance of the meeting on which there were there were no questions or comments.

7. Approval of Minutes of PCC meeting - 1st February 2023

These were approved, without amendment, and signed by JC.

8. 'In Principle' Approval of Minutes of Meeting of Parishioners - 23rd April 2023

These were approved 'in principle', without amendment, and signed by JC.

9. 'In Principle' Approval of Minutes of Annual Parochial Church Meeting - 23rd April 2023

These were approved 'in principle', without amendment, and signed by JC.

10. Approval of Minutes of PCC meeting - 23rd April 2023

These were approved, without amendment, and signed by JC.

11. Matters arising from the minutes (not covered elsewhere in the agenda)

There were no matters arising that were not to be covered elsewhere within the agenda.

12. Team Reports:

12.1 Liturgy

DL made the following observations and comments:

- There has been a steady growth in congregation numbers and in particular the excellent attendance at the Easter Eucharist and Coronation services were pleasing.
- In the light of the departure of GM, no Eucharist will take place on Tuesdays or Saturdays until the Vacancy is filled.
- House Communion and House Groups including the one at Hughenden Garden Village led by Maureen Lampard, were commended.

- DL concluded by highlighting the following and inviting attendance:
 - Led by the Spirit at 17:00 on Sunday 21st May with the Revd Ruth Harley.
 - Thy Kingdom Come which will be celebrated between 20th and 27th May.
 - Mission to Communion – June 18th

12.2 **Mission: Churchyard Update**

JC referred to a report prepared by GM and circulated in advance of the meeting upon which there were no specific questions or comments.

As part of the report, GM had requested approval for funds to proceed with sundry ecological surveys as recommended by the Landscape Architect, namely Keen Consultants for a fee of around £2,500 including VAT.

This expenditure was approved in principle by the PCC, although JLD, was given leave to discuss the detail with GM prior to the work being authorised to proceed.

It was also noted that in the light of GM's departure, a volunteer / volunteers were required to take responsibility for this project.

JLd

All

12.3 **Pastoral Matters**

JLk noted the following:

- If anyone is aware of a congregant or someone who would benefit from a pastoral visit, including home communion, they should make JLk aware.
- In response to a question as to whether the South Aisle should continue to be used for members of the Eucharist congregation who prefer not to take communion in the nave, JLk and DL remarked that whilst soundings would be taken and, if necessary a new risk assessment completed, the Presidents' attention should always be drawn to anyone with impaired mobility, who would benefit from communion being administered to them in their pew.
- There may need to be more guidance given to Sidesmen and to congregants in both the order of service and during the service, as appropriate, about the procession to take communion, as it is not always clear to visitors.
- It was confirmed that at present, it is not intended to re-instate the communion rail.
- It was noted that the South Aisle would continue to be offered as a location that will not be captured on video feeds.

12.4 **Children, Youth & Families**

RC referred to the Children, Youth and Families Report, circulated in advance of the meeting, upon which there were no comments.

It was noted that whilst requests for volunteers to assist with Lighthouse are already being sought, via News, the request for donations will be deferred until June / early July.

All

12.5 **Stewardship & Finance**

JLd reviewed the contents of the Stewardship & Finance PCC Update (including minutes from recent Stewardship and Finance Task Group Meetings), published in advance of the meeting and added the following points:

- Income from church hire, Café, collections and concerts is higher than expected and resulting in a favourable variance against budget.
- The commitments and expenditure relating to fabric costs and maintenance need to be reviewed and reconciled.
- The proportion of regular giving by a shrinking / aging population remains a concern.

There were no other questions or comments.

12.6 **Buildings & Fabric**

JC referred to the minutes of the Buildings and Fabric Committee, circulated in advance of the meeting, on which there were no specific comments.

Rental Properties

JC confirmed that the investment property in Aylesbury has been let and the third monthly rent payment of £1,250.00 had been collected.

JC also advised that owing to various environmental and other matters it was proving very difficult to let 3 Castle Place at the desired rent level of £1,250.00 pcm and it was unanimously agreed that this could be lowered to £1,100.00 pcm. It was noted this reduction did not require formal Diocesan approval.

Church Fabric Issues

Volunteers were requested to assist with the re-decoration of the toilets. The various paints and other materials are being sourced.

It was reported that work to the next tranche of tower steps is due to recommence imminently.

It was also noted that the replacement of the ladder from the tower roof to the base of the flagpole needs to be organised.

All

PH

12.7 Communications

JC referred to the communications report, published in advance of this meeting, on which there were no specific comments or questions.

13. Churchwardens' Report

There were no matters raised beyond those covered elsewhere in the agenda.

14. Oakley Hall Report

JC referred to the minutes of the Oakley Hall Management Committee Meeting of 26th April 2023, published in advance of the meeting and upon which there were no comments.

EM reported that the Fire Risk Assessment has now been scheduled to take place on 29th June.

15. Safeguarding

JLk noted that in addition to all members of the PCC requiring the safeguarding Basic Awareness certification, it has now been determined that the Foundation certification is also required.

JLk, will send PH the details of the Diocesan Safeguarding portal, where this training can be found and requested everyone to complete the Foundation training and any necessary re-certification of the Basic Awareness training, as a matter of priority, preferably in advance of the next PCC Meeting. Members were also requested to send the relevant certificates to the office for logging.

Post Meeting Note: The Diocesan Safeguarding Portal details were received by PH on 19th May and have been circulated to the PCC.

16. AOUB

Vacancy Prayers

LM reminded everyone of the Vacancy Prayers that invariably take place on the Quiet Space at 12:15 every Saturday.

Quiz

JC, on behalf of DS, reminded members of the PCC of the Quiz Night, which is scheduled to take place at 19:00 for 19:30 on Friday 9th June, in Church and after discussion, the following roles were allocated:

- Securing raffle prizes - **JB**
- Running the raffle on the event night (sales of tickets, draw etc) - **PH**
- A quiz master for the evening - **MJ**
- Drumming up teams - Everyone to participate in that please - **All**
- Organiser for interval game - sliding the coin at the bottle was easy and great fun – **ES and RC (Subject to diary check)**
- Organiser for a warm-up game - usually something like Heads and Tails but organiser can choose what they prefer – **ES and RC (Subject to diary check)**
- Designing a poster - **EM / DL**
- Purchase and layout a small quantity of light snacks for the tables – **LM to purchase / PH to lay out**
- Clear up post event - tables/chairs, leaving church in good order for the next day - **Numerous volunteers including ES and PH**

Collections

It was noted that collections at the services with larger congregations, particularly 10:30, are taking longer and it is not clear why this is happening but was thought to be partially due to donations being made by card. It was agreed that to address this:

- Plates would continue to be put out at the beginning of the service.
- The service sheets would highlight collections plates being available for people to make their donations before the service commences.
- LM requested that sums raised through collections were always acknowledged at the appropriate point during the service.

Meeting Ends

JLk closed the meeting by leading everyone in prayer.

The meeting ended at approximately **21.08**

Next meeting date:

31st May 2023 **SLT (Team event in lieu of Strategy)**

Future meeting dates:

5th July 2023 **SLT (SC)**

19th July 2023 **PCC**

6th September 2023 **SLT (SC)**

13th September 2023 **SLT (Strategy)**

20th September 2023 **PCC**

8th November 2023 **SLT (SC)**

22nd November 2023 **PCC**

28th April 2024 **Meeting of Parishioners and Annual Parochial Church Meeting** (Sunday, commencing at 11:15)

All on Wednesdays commencing at 19:30 in church, unless otherwise stated