

These minutes are published on the basis that such matters (if there be any) which the PCC has resolved shall remain confidential have not been included

Minutes of the PCC Meeting held on Monday 4th December 2023, 7.15pm in the Reid Room

Present: David Goodhew (Chair), Lindsey Goodhew, Mark Walley, Gail Roberts, Ruth Ritchie, Tony Hutchings, Malcolm McGregor, Phil Edwards, Lynda Walker, Barbara Edwards, Thom Mallam, Paul Bury, Andrew Devereux, Alistair Bolton, James Cawdell, Fiona Houldsworth, Ali Ward, Nixon Christian.

1. Worship

Nixon read Luke 10:25-37 and led the PCC in a time of prayer.

2. Apologies for absence

Sue Bell

3. Minutes of the meeting of 6th November 2023

There was one amendment: Andrew Devereux was present at the meeting. With this amendment the meeting was happy to accept the minutes as a true record of the meeting of 6th November 2023.

4. Matters Arising

- a) Festival Teesside – There is a planning meeting on 25th January, to which PCC members were invited. There is a worship and prayer evening on Saturday 27th April at the Globe Theatre, Stockton.
- b) Church Hall Fire Risk Assessment – It was proposed that **the PCC accepts the Church Hall fire risk assessment**, proposed by Gail Roberts, seconded by Andrew Devereux, all in favour.
- c) Green Plan – it was agreed that the draft green plan would be circulated to the congregation in January for comments.

5. Correspondence

Phil Edwards said that he would be circulating a form for trustees to declare any money relationships to the church.

6. Vicar's Report

David circulated some statistics about attendance and baptisms from the Church of England, which showed that St Barnabas had managed to do better than national trends. This was encouraging, particularly the figures relating to children and families. David thanked Mark for all his work with children and families. St Barnabas is very blessed in the numbers of children, but the PCC was reminded of the continuing need for children's workers.

Sunday 14th January will be Vision Sunday.

7. Care Homes

There are four or five residential homes in the parish, where connections have been curtailed in recent years. These are now opening up. Monthly Communion services are taking place in Loxley Chase and St Mary's. Carol singing in various homes is planned for Saturday 23rd December.

8. Safeguarding

Ali Ward reported that she and Fiona Fletcher had met with David and Immy Burgess-Hall recently.

9. Staff Salaries' Increase

Staff salaries increase in January. The PCC has previously agreed to be a Real Living Wage employer. The RLW was £10.90 an hour in 2023 and increases to £12 an hour in 2024. Phil proposed that **St Barnabas continues to be a Real Living Wage employer and therefore pay our staff £12 an hour and apply the same increase of £1.10 an hour to Robin and Oli**, seconded by Fiona Houldsworth, 15 in favour, 1 against.

9. Budget

Details of the proposed budget had been circulated in advance of the meeting and are attached to the minutes. Phil Edwards, the treasurer, outlined the financial situation. The reserves policy agreed by the PCC

is to have 10 weeks' expenditure, £61,000 of reserves, and the proposed budget means that we would finish the year with this amount. Charity law says that we have to have a reserves policy, but it is up to us to decide what it should be. The budget does not assume that 23 Linden Grove will be sold in 2024. Over quite a few years we have been spending more than we have received. Legacies have been received on average every other year. We need to develop a budget that will more or less balance. The budget demonstrates the tension between funding and finance of St Barnabas and the wider church. The budget proposes a further reduction of the freewill offer to the Diocese.

In the discussion that followed it was suggested that while this is not ideal, but the best that can be achieved in the current circumstances. It was pointed out the building budget is very small and that this is still a deficit budget, but it was a start to addressing the problem of spending more than we receive. It was also pointed out that we are budgeting for a substantial increase in voluntary giving.

Dismay at the further reduction of the freewill offer was expressed. The Church of England at large is in a difficult financial position. It was felt that it was too much to cut all at once and that as a large church we should be giving substantially to the Diocese. It was pointed out that we have probably been over-generous to the Diocese for a number of years. Other possible ways to reduce expenditure, such as reducing staff hours and changing Kingdom Mission Giving, were suggested.

A stewardship push for 2024 is proposed, with the aim of increasing the number of givers in the congregation. We have about 120 giving units at present and this should be higher.

It was proposed by Paul Bury that **the PCC accepts the budget for 2024 as circulated**, seconded by Malcolm McGregor, 10 in favour, 4 against, 3 abstentions.

11. Number of Elected Members of PCC

This had been discussed at the previous meeting. Barbara Edwards proposed that **the PCC recommends to the APCM that the number of members elected to the PCC each year should be increased to 4**, seconded by Alistair Bolton, all in favour.

12. Facilities Management Report

This was circulated.

13. Children and Families

Mark suggested that the PCC invite Big Kids to report periodically to the PCC on the work with children and families.

14. Media Worker Contract Renewal

It was proposed that **the PCC renews the media worker's contract for the next 12 months**, proposed by Paul Bury, seconded by James Cawdell, all in favour.

15. Communion Bread Questions

The PCC divided into small groups for a lively discussion about Communion bread. This will be returned to at a future meeting.

16. Rachel Grandey: New Partnership Agreement

This had been circulated and the PCC had some questions about this. David and Barbara agreed to find out more information.

17. AONB

None

18. Date of next meeting

Monday 5th February, 7.15pm in the Reid Room.

Chairman.....

Date.....