

Parish of Cirencester

The minutes of the meeting of the Parochial Church Council held at St Lawrence Church Centre on Wednesday, 14th December at 7.45pm

Present: Revd Canon L Doolan (Chair), Revd H Gilbert, Revd K Richardson, Mrs H Hammond, Mr P Cottey, Mrs B Springate, Mr S Smith, Miss P Phillips, Mr R Williams, Mrs S Beck, Mrs R Gray, Mr J Lawrence, Mr J Light, Mr H Gray, Mrs J Godsell, Mrs J Henson, Mr M Radford, Mr M Stratton, Mr J Bathurst.

1. **Fr Leonard** opened the meeting with prayer.
2. **Apologies for absence** had been received from Mrs M Austin, Mr R Marlowe, Miss A Anderson, Mrs J Iveson, Mr J Eaton.
3. **The minutes of the meeting** held on 23rd November 2016 were signed as a true record.
4. **Matters arising.**
 - a. Fr Leonard reported that, as requested by the PCC, the Resolving Issues with Volunteers Policy had been rescinded pending further discussion.
 - b. A front page has been added to the Staff Handbook making clear which policies originated from the PCC and which are taken from the Diocesan Policies.
 - c. Fr Leonard advised that he had taken an opportunity to meet one-to-one with Mrs Bannister regarding her line management, the outcome being that the existing arrangement of a dual line management (Vicar and Mrs Hammond) would continue, to be reviewed in six months. In response to a written question submitted by Miss Anderson stating that it was decided at the last PCC meeting to arrange a meeting between himself, Mrs Hammond, Mrs Bannister and an independent person as to whether Mrs Bannister would prefer Fr Leonard to be her sole line manager, he said he, as Chairman, had overruled the PCC's recommendation and the line management would continue as before.
5. **Finance**
 - a. The Hon Treasurer had distributed a spreadsheet outlining the financial situation. He pointed out that the Parish Share had increased substantially, more than the rate of inflation and that the sum requested increases regularly. This continues to pressure the deficit faced by the parish and, since planned giving is almost static, then the situation can only worsen, unless addressed urgently. Although reserves can buffer this in the short term, the reserve will eventually be reduced to nil. Since the Parish Share is determined on church attendance in October and since we, as a parish, have been successful in attracting people into our services, then we are effectively penalised for growing the church.
Mention was made that the Mutual Support element, rather than being identified as a separate total, is now subsumed into the overall Parish Share total.
After a wide ranging discussion it was agreed that the PCC should challenge the Parish Share figure and how this impacts negatively on a growing parish. Members also agreed to devolve responsibility to the Finance sub-committee to look into how and why we are being forced into an increasing deficit.
With reference to the spreadsheet, Mr Cottey asked that the salaries and associated costs for the Youth workers be listed separately; similarly for costs and income connected with the halls.

- b. Approval was given for salary increases, as laid out in the Personnel Committee minutes. **This was proposed by Mr Cottey, seconded by Mr Smith and passed, with 3 abstentions (who declared an interest).**
- c. Budget for 2017. Mr Bathurst said he would distribute the budget plan to members for comment.

6. Matters for Report from Churches/Halls

- a. Mr Cottey referred to a paper which had been circulated regarding the installation of hand railings at Holy Trinity. Costs had been met through a donation. **He proposed, and Mrs Springate seconded, that the installation be approved. Agreed unanimously.**
- b. Mr Cottey continued by saying that the Social Committee would consider how best to distribute Holy Trinity coffee money.

Matters for Report from Churches Together in Cirencester

Mr Lawrence reported that the community singing outside the Parish Church had gone ahead successfully.

Awareness would be raised for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in our churches.

7. Reports from Sub-Committees

a. Personnel Committee

- i) Update on Office assistant appointment. Mr Gray reported that, to date, no applications had been received. Fr Leonard advised that the interview panel would consist of Mr J Light (Chair), Mrs S Beck and Mrs P Brown.
- ii) The dates for interviews would be 5th and 6th January.
- iii) A review of the Parish Office will be presented at the January PCC meeting.

b. Other groups/committees

- i) Mr Stratton had circulated a discussion paper outlining the **Terms of Reference for the Personnel Committee**. During discussion and with regard to delegating responsibility to the Personnel Committee, Mr Cottey said he felt that only the Standing Committee possessed delegated responsibility and that was only when a matter needed urgent consideration and when it was not possible to convene a full PCC meeting. Areas raised for clarification and further consideration included when delegated responsibility could be appropriate, quorum size and composition (Trustees/co-options) and the method of election of chair and members. The approach to electing chairmen and members, through the May meeting following the APCM, should be limited to the Personnel and Finance Committees. It was emphasised that any delegated powers must be ratified by the PCC as a corporate body.

It was proposed by Mrs Hammond and seconded by Mr Stratton that the Terms of Reference be accepted subject to the recommended amendments and that they be reviewed in twelve months' time. Agreed by all.

- ii) **Conflict of Interest Policy**. Mr Stratton outlined the points made on the paper previously circulated. The Chair of a committee would have the decision as how to approach members who declared an interest (i.e. leaving the room during discussion). A Conflict of Interest may be more than financial and could encompass family or business relationships. Trustees were required to complete

a Declaration of Interest form at each May meeting.

It was proposed by Mrs Hammond and seconded by Mr Light that the policy with amendments be adopted. Agreed by all.

- iii) **Pay Policy.** This had been circulated prior to the meeting. Mr Cottey said that no overtime arrangement was included on an employee's contract and any overtime needed to be negotiated separately and specifically. Mr Cottey proposed and Mrs Gray seconded that the Pay Policy be accepted. Agreed unanimously.
- iv) **Risk Management Policy.** A paper from Mr Eaton had been distributed to all members prior to the meeting and Fr Leonard thanked him for the work done so far. Members noted the recommendations at the end of the paper and asked that Mr Eaton transfer these to a policy and accompanying risk register.

8. **Chairman's Notices**

- a. Julian Wilson will become a self-supporting curate for the parish. Fr Leonard said the working agreement will be circulated and that he will be Julian's training supervisor.
- b. On February 5th Bishop Rachael will attend the Holy Trinity Confirmation at 10am. Fr Leonard recommended that this be the only morning service that Sunday.

9. **Secretary's Notices** – None

10. **Response to the Homeless in the Churchyard.** Mr Williams had circulated various papers and letters regarding the circumstances of the homeless who use the Parish Church churchyard as a base for their tents. Mr Williams explained his suggestion that the stone shed, currently part used for storage of equipment, be made available as a temporary shelter for the homeless men. He said that Graham and Juliette Harris were supportive of the project and had hoped they would have been able to attend the meeting. Fr Leonard explained that their attendance would have been inappropriate until the PCC had discussed the situation. Mr Lawrence said that the shed, in its current state, would need a good deal of work done to make it watertight and ensure its structural integrity. Discussion followed and it was finally agreed to accept Mr Smith's offer to talk with Graham and Juliette Harris about a progression for care for the homeless and he would report back to members via the PCC Secretary. Fr Leonard pointed out that the Vicar and Churchwarden's fund could be used to help support this area.

11. **PCC Discussion and Response to the Statue Project.** Postponed until January

12. **Any other Business** – None

13. **Date of Next meeting.** 18th January 7.45pm at the Parish Centre.
Sat 21st January. Strategy Morning on Property. 9.30am Parish Centre.