

Parish of Cirencester with Watermoor and St Lawrence, Chesterton

Minutes of the Parochial Church Council meeting held on Wednesday 25th July 2018 at the Parish Centre at 7.45pm

Present: Mr P Cottey (Chair), Mr H Gray (Secretary), Mrs S Beck, Mr R Williams, Mr P Bontoft, Mrs D Miller, Mrs J Godsell, Revd J Wilson, Mr S Smith, Dr R Dolton, Mrs B Springate, Mrs M Austin, Miss P Phillips, Mr J Light, Miss A Anderson, Mrs J Ivison,.

- 1a. Revd J Wilson opened the meeting with **prayer**.
- 1b. Mr Cottey asked members to keep Fr Leonard, Lynne and their parishioners in their prayers, during the aftermath of the tragic fire around Athens.
2. **Apologies for Absence:** Mr M Stratton, Mr H Kennard, Ms C Luck, Mr J Bathurst, Mr J Lawrence, Mr D Henson, Mrs E Ellis, Revd K Richardson, Revd Canon H Gilbert, Mr R Marlowe, Mrs J Henson, Mrs H Hammond.
3. **Sailboat Church, Chapter 3:** Revd Julian led a short discussion on this chapter. Summary: the Holy Spirit is a difficult concept to grasp and is referred to in a variety of images e.g. as a force of power or 'still, small voice'. The Holy Spirit can lead us into all truth. Fr Julian said that the Holy Spirit is not a magical thing but the person of God, as doctrine advises. In the New Testament the Holy Spirit leads through the community, e.g. the disciples acting together. The Holy Spirit is a 'who' not a 'what' and can guide us as individuals challenging us to set aside our own egos and listen to the Spirit's prompting. The Holy Spirit can give us peace during difficult times when we need to rely upon God's strength.
4. **Minutes of the June meeting:** These were signed as a true record.
5. **Matters Arising from the minutes:**
 - Item 14 (b) Watermoor Churchyard Biodiversity. Mr Cottey pointed out that this was, overall, a ten year project.
 - Item 15 (b) Work on the archives, housed in the top floor of 1, Coxwell Street had begun.
 - Item 15 (c) The brass plate outside 1 Dollar Street, denoting 'The Vicarage', had been removed.
6. **Finance Report:** Mr Smith advised members that we continue to run with a deficit and it would be helpful if figures could be generated to show a more detailed break-down of the cost centres so that areas of heavy expenditure could be identified and possible savings, therefore, considered. Mr Smith agreed that making savings would be difficult and we need to find ways to generate additional income. This will, of course, be discussed with the Vicar in due course. Inevitably, should we continue with such a deficit, there will be no reserve funds to meet the shortfall. Mr Cottey agreed the need for a cost centre break-down, especially with regard to the parish share and salaries costs, both of which are high outgoings (Parish share = £13.5k pcm month, with salaries at £9k pcm). He mentioned that the Hon Treasurer was recommending a release of some investments to enable cash-in-hand. This would be left with Mr Bathurst to action. In answer to Mr Bontoft's query about any credit being given with regard to the incumbent vacancy, members were told that there was none, the quota remained the same. Although it was felt we were moving forward there would still be some difficult decisions to be faced. Mr Smith pointed out that as we are a training parish there are benefits, insofar that we do obtain access to Curates from time to time with little, or no, cost.
7. **Reports from Sub-Committees:**
 - a) Personnel Committee: Mr Light reported that Miss Anderson and Mr Gray had met with Mrs Bannister for her appraisal. Targets had been set and he expressed his thanks to Miss Anderson and Mr Gray for a positive and helpful appraisal. The next Personnel meeting, he said, would be at Toad Cottage, on August 9th at 7pm.
 - b) Finance Meeting: Covered above.

8. **Chairman's Notices:** Mr Cottey alerted members to consider the future of 1 and 3 Dollar Street and 1, Coxwell Street. The Diocese owns 1 Dollar Street and the Phillip Marner Trust owns 3 Dollar Street (Corner Stone) but is leased to the Diocese. Through the Diocesan Trust, we own 1, Coxwell Street which is ear-marked as a PCC building. Mr Cottey emphasised that although the 'old' Vicarage had incorporated some of the upper floors of 3 Dollar Street, these rooms were still integral to the latter. Each of these buildings possessed three floors, as does 1, Coxwell Street. The terms of the lease to the Diocese of 3 Dollar Street are to return it to its original three-floor status upon termination of the lease. It is highly likely, Mr Cottey continued, that the Diocese and the Phillip Marner Trust will sell 1 and 3, Dollar Street. In a 2016 summary of our property portfolio, it was suggested that should the Phillip Marner Trust ever consider selling 3, Dollar Street that it might be useful to consider selling 1, Coxwell Street since the combination of the two, which are currently linked (services and garden area), might be attractive to a purchaser. Mr Cottey added that, in his opinion, adding 1 Coxwell Street to any sale would be even better as far as the PCC is concerned. We should consider this option very carefully as it could realise capital. To rent out 1, Coxwell Street as a dwelling or as offices would cost a considerable amount in order to renovate the property to an acceptable standard; this is not really a viable option.

Mr Smith said that the Vicar needs an office in town and 1 Coxwell Street would be appropriate for one year. Fr Graham has indicated this would be acceptable since it is private and discrete. Dr Dolton asked that the PCC be kept fully informed, where possible, of any Diocesan or Phillip Marner Trust decisions with regard to the selling of 1 and 3 Dollar Street.

Mr Smith proposed that the ground floor should be allocated as an office for the Vicar for a year. This was seconded by Miss Anderson and approved unanimously.

9. **Secretary's Notices :** None.

10. Matters of Report from Churches/Halls:

a. **St Lawrence:** Mrs Austin said that works identified through the Quinquennial Inspection would cost £2725. Mr Smith asked that alternative quotes be obtained and Mr Austin said she would action this in discussion with Mr Hopegood.

Mrs Austin added that the position of the meters made them difficult to read.

b. **Holy Trinity:** Mrs Springate advised members that, with regard to their own Quinquennial Inspection, the Church Architect had compiled a priority list of areas that needed attention. There was nothing critical. She also said that a Cyprus tree had been storm damaged and, although a branch had been removed, it was recommended that the whole tree be felled at a cost of £690.

The replacement lighting was in hand with faculty permission imminent. The cost is just over £20k with generous grants of £10k being offered through the Friends and £1k from the AllChurches Trust. Mr Cottey added that there had also been three offers of fundraising activities and a further six offers of financial donations.

Mr Cottey said that, with regard to the Parish Hall, it was no longer possible to obtain 8' fluorescent tubes and therefore consideration would need to be given to replacing the light fittings. Replacing the eight lights would cost around £3k. He emphasised that the Hall generated a good income which would meet this cost.

c. **The Parish Church:** Mr Smith said that recently a piece of stone had fallen from one of the high windows into the church, possibly due to expansion of metal work. He had noticed that there were indications, elsewhere, that this had happened before. A 'cherry picker' would be used to investigate the safety of these areas.

The Royal Agricultural Convocations 2018, held on 19th June, had gone extremely well and may well be an annual event, bringing in much needed revenue.

Mr P Bontoft had been appointed as the new Head Sacristan and it was pointed out that all servers would need DBS clearance. The process was underway and would be carried out through the Parish Office. Miss Anderson added that she had recently attended Safeguarding training and she invited PCC members also to attend such events.

11. **Matters for Report from Churches Together in Cirencester:** No report
12. **Matters of Report from Deanery and Diocesan Synods:** Fr Howard had circulated a booklet entitled 'Setting God's people Free.' It was agreed to defer this item until September.
13. **Special Items for Discussion/Information:**

Regarding the Induction service on 22nd September, Dr Dolton advised that many people had been invited and she had currently received 65 replies. The Trinity Chapel and Parish Centre would be made available for robing and the reception after the service would be in church. Catering and provision of drinks etc. was in hand. She added that people would be attending from Fr Graham's previous parishes. Our own congregations were obviously invited. Thought should be given to keeping the service length down. The police should be informed that the event is taking place and consideration given to the best place for parking e.g. the old Watermoor School or Rugby Club. Fr Graham and his wife, Angela, would be moving on 8th August.
14. **Any Other Business:** Mr Williams asked about progress on establishing a kitchen in the Parish Church. Dr Dolton replied that, currently, discussion of costs and feasibility were on-going, as was the most appropriate location. An application to the Friends, when the project was decided, would be appropriate.
15. **Date of the Next Meeting:** Since Fr Graham's Induction service had now been settled for 22nd September, it would seem appropriate to move the scheduled PCC's September meeting date (18th September) until later in the month. **It was agreed to set this for Tuesday 25th September in the Parish Centre at 7.30pm.***

Mention was also made of endeavouring not to arrange PCC meetings during half-terms. An attempt was made to re-arrange the October meeting but individual members found alternative suggestions equally inconvenient so the October meeting date currently stands.

*Fr Graham has subsequently agreed to this change of date.