

Parish of Cirencester with Watermoor and Chesterton

Minutes of the meeting of the Parochial Church Council held on Wednesday 26th July 2017 at the Parish Centre at 7.45p.m.

Present: Mr P Cottey (Vice-Chair), Mr H Gray (Secretary), Mr J Light, Mr M Radford, Mr M Stratton, Mr H Kennard, Mrs C Luck, Mrs D Miller, Mr R Williams, Mr J Lawrence, Mrs E Ellis, Mr S Smith, Dr R Dolton, Mrs B Springate, Mrs M Austin, Miss A Anderson, Mrs J Ivison, Rt Revd R Evens (in attendance).

1. The vice-Chair opened the meeting with the collect for the day.

Mr Cottey made the following preliminary statements:

'It is important to note that most of the discussions and decisions taken at a PCC by members are done confidentially to allow free and full discussions. The information is not in the public domain until after the PCC minutes have been agreed and approved at the following meeting. In the past personal interpretations of discussions and decisions made have been taken away from the meeting and discussed outside that meeting which have not fully reflected the agreed and minuted item. This does cause unnecessary upset or rumours so please respect that confidentiality.

It is also important that individual trustees, or small groups of trustees, do not have the authority to make decisions on behalf of the PCC or Parish. All decisions must be passed by the PCC at an appropriate meeting. We also have sub-committees who, other than an emergency standing committee, only make recommendations to the PCC for their decision or ratification.

A reminder that, if appropriate, a Trustee must declare a conflict of interest when an agenda item is being discussed and/or a decision made following that discussion.

Any Other Business must be passed to the PCC secretary at least 5 days prior to the meeting.

Papers for circulation to members should also be available at least 5 days before the meeting, this is to allow adequate time for the documents to be reviewed prior to the meeting. Late documents may need to be held over until the following meeting.'

2. **Apologies for absence** had been received from Miss P Phillips, Mrs S Beck, Mr J Bathurst, Revd H Gilbert, Revd K Richardson, Mr D Henson, Mrs J Henson, Mr R Marlowe, Mrs J Godsell, Mrs H Hammond
3. **The minutes of the meeting** held on 20th June were signed as a true record.
4. **Matters arising**
 - a. In a written communication from Mrs Hammond, she observed that :
"The (June) minutes (Item 7 ii) state: '... since, as trustees, we had agreed the Organ Festival was a Parish event, the matter was passed to the Vice-Chair and Treasurer for comment.' It would be helpful if this could be amended as the current wording could suggest, incorrectly, that the festival might be a PCC organised event. To be clear and accurate it would help if the minutes described it not as a 'Parish event' but as a 'PCC underwritten event'.
Mr Cottey pointed out that the PCC had **not** agreed to *underwrite* the 2017 event but to *support* it. He suggested the festival should be referred to as a PCC supported event. Mrs Hammond's observation was duly noted.
 - b. Miss Anderson referred to minute 6 iii and advised that since Mr J Light was already a member of the Friends, Mrs C Luck would be a PCC representative together with Mr Cottey (already elected).
5. **Feedback from the Standing Committee held immediately following the June PCC meeting.** The recommendation from this meeting was that the Treasurer reviewed the current financial processes which relate to income generated events and should make suggestions regarding the administration and financial management of any such future events held by, on behalf of or supported by the PCC. Mr Kennard asked how that might affect events (e.g. St Nicholas service/appeal) that raised funds for salaries. **Mr Bathurst will report back at the next meeting**

and it will be best to discuss details and implications at that point. This would include points made by Miss Anderson and Mr Radford about how money raised should be spent.

Mr Cottey continued by saying that the accounts from the CIOF (circulated prior to the meeting) showed that £2,000 had now been passed across to the PCC for musical events during 2017. Mr Cottey asked for any comments to be directed to the Finance Committee. Mr Smith advised that the accounts were being forwarded to Wenn Townsend as part of the financial annual review. Miss Anderson drew the meeting's attention to the assertion (within these accounts) that sums of money had been 'lost in the office'. It was agreed that this needed investigation by the Finance Committee, since this appeared to allege a failure in Office financial management. The identification of such funds within Parish accounts should be clearer and not absorbed into a general heading. This would ensure transparency of accounting. **Mr Smith said he would report back on this at the next meeting.**

6. Finance report.

- a. Mr Smith reported that BBC rent for the tower (StJB) is being finalised.
- b. He also said that in view of the outstanding rent on 6 West Market place of some £20,000, he proposed that this be taken to the small claims court to reclaim the debt. This motion was seconded by Mr Light and unanimously approved. There would be a small cost (£100).
- c. The accounts, to date, showed a growth in the investment portfolio, although there was a caveat that these could decrease as well as increase. Mr Williams emphasised his preference for investment in property but it was pointed out that the current arrangement allowed for ease of access to funds should the need arise.

7. Reports from sub-committees

Personnel Committee. A paper, circulated prior to the meeting, had stated that Mr David Evans had left employment as Parish Office assistant at the end of his temporary contract. Mr Light said that despite training and monitoring, Mr Evans had found the situation difficult. Mrs Bron Dale, shop manager, had agreed to take on some clerical hours but there was an urgent need to cover the reception desk for five mornings to allow Mrs Bannister time to concentrate on her own responsibilities. Miss Anderson and Mr Light commented that the management of the office was greatly improved and that the volunteers, who had previously left, had since returned.

Dr Dolton said that Mr P Flaherty would be retiring as verger in January 2018 and it would be sensible to appoint his replacement for November this year to ensure an overlap for advice and training.

The meeting agreed that the Personnel Committee should advertise and appoint appropriately in both staff appointments.

Mr Williams recommended the reinstatement of the PPG to take responsibility of the parish property portfolio. Mr Cottey agreed to keep this in mind.

8. Chairman's Notices

- a. The Vicar's name had been removed from noticeboards and times of morning and evening prayer changed.
- b. Vacancy progress. Dr Dolton reported receipt of many responses from the congregations either directly or via the shoe boxes in HTW and StJB. The six wardens had met and intend to meet again. She requested any photos (with people) to include in the profile. The time scale is: Sept 7th to tidy up the profile; September 19th (PCC meeting and Section11); September 25th Section 12 meeting.
- c. Parish Fayre on September 9th. Discussion ranged over appropriate advertising and how best to include social media. Mr Kennard volunteered to publicise the Fayre through Facebook. Miss Anderson agreed to forward a poster to him. Mr Cottey will inform the Fayre committee. The charities benefitting from Fare proceeds are: the Stroke Club, Churn Project and the Open Air Pool.

9. Secretary's Notices.

Any member who had not completed a trustee declaration form was asked to do so.

10. Matters for Report from Churches/Halls.

- a. Nothing to report from StL.

- b. Mrs Springate reported the water supply to HTW was now restored and that the hand rails would be installed soon. Mr Cottey mentioned the lighting inside the church still needed investigation and protruding tree roots, along the external tarmac pathways, were a potential trip hazard.
- c. Watermoor School is hoping to buy sets of class bibles suitable for their different age ranges and is seeking sponsorship. Anyone willing to help financially should contact Ali Castle, who has received around half of the required amount already. Mr Radford offered sets of NRSV bibles no longer needed at the College, which although not perhaps suitable for the school, might be very welcome in the churches. Miss Anderson mentioned that coffee money (StJB) would be supporting this cause. It was also suggested that Mr R Marlowe might be able to advise (Bible Society link). It was noted that the Year 6 leavers already receive a children's Bible through the Open the Book initiative.
- d. The Watermoor school art exhibition at HTW had been very well received.
- e. The RAU convocation (1 day event) had gone well. Thanks were expressed to Mr Smith, Mr Flaherty and Mr Lawrence.
- f. Mr Williams suggested a window in StJB be netted as protection against vandalism. Mr Smith said he would meet with Mr Williams and evaluate the situation.
- g. Dr Dolton emphasised that the Friends' Standing Committee wished to enforce any requests for financial help come via the PCC.
- h. The gas meter at the Parish Centre has been changed to a Smart meter.

11. Matters for Report from Churches Together in Cirencester

- a. Mr Lawrence reported the AGM had taken place on 6th July.
- b. The Syrian refugee fund was healthy.
- c. The CTiC fund was also healthy and there was a possibility of reduced contributions from churches.
- d. Future events
 - i. Bible Course (Salvation Army)
 - ii. Holocaust Memorial Day (5th April 2018)
 - iii. Gospel Rap at the New Life Church
 - iv. The Hospital service at the Baptist church had been very successful. It was noted that Evensong had not been cancelled at the Parish Church this year as was customary should the Hospital service be scheduled at the same time.

12. Safeguarding.

- a. Miss Anderson reminded members that the Children and Young People's Safeguarding policy had been circulated. The policy for Vulnerable Adults will be forthcoming. Miss Anderson circulated two shortened versions for information to members, which will also be available in churches. Applications for DBS should still be made through Mr H Gray. The next safeguarding course would be in November at the Parish Centre and it was recommended that members attend if at all possible. The Chair expressed thanks to Miss Anderson for her work in this area.

13. Any Other Business

- a. The presentation of the Photobook showing the wooden carvings in the Parish Church will be on August 9th in the Parish Church at 11am.
- b. Please submit any items for AOB to the secretary no later than 5 days before meeting.

14 Dates for next meeting:

September 7th: Strategy meeting for Parish profile. Watermoor Church Hall at 7.30pm
 September 19th: PCC meeting and Section 11. Parish Centre at 7.30pm
 September 25th: Section 12 meeting. Parish Centre at 7pm

Meeting closed at 9.14pm with the Grace.