Minutes of a meeting of the St George in the East PCC held on 12 November 2023 at 12.00

Present: Rev Rich Springer (Chair);Tricia Bing; Miriam Brittenden; Nathaniel Darling; Alan Dorji; Jane Earl; Rev Caitlin Harland; Rob Hayward; Phil Hogan; Alan Ramanoop; Annadale Ramanoop; Katie Peel

In attendance – Sophie Campkin; Michelle Meso

Apologies for absence were received from Francelise Mamilonne and Paul Kellaway

# Richard opened the meeting in prayer.

# Minutes of the last meeting

The Minutes of the PCC meeting of 8 October were presented to the meeting. The minutes were accepted as a correct record., with the addition of Alan Dorji as present at the meeting

# Matters arising

The following issues were reported:-

* Update on staffing for young people and OpenTable would be presented to the PCC in the New Year. – Action RS
* A meeting of the trustees of the Henderson charity was still being planned – action RS/ CH
* a meeting regarding the old mortuary was still required Action KP/ RWS to pursue
* Crypt rental- noted that it would be helpful to have accurate measurements in order to market the space more effectively. Action- JE to seek some pro bono support to do this

1. **Rectors report**

Richard introduced the Rector’s report which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. He drew attention to the appointment of Margaret Coulter as the new safeguarding officer, and thanked Miriam Brittenden for her loyal service in this role, and noted Margaret will be working with him and Katie P

# 5.Beacon project and fundraising –

# Rich provided an update on the Beacon Project, together with a view on the possible cost of the project taking into account the works which need to be done as set out in

# the Quinquennial review which had been produced by a Quantity surveyor on a pro bono basis. The figure arrived at was in the region of £9.2m at this stage, for the building without any additional funding for activity costs. Following a further discussion there was also a view of the other work which might be done to reduce the costs. The papers circulated also included a summary of work to date from the fundraiser, together with some indications of where funding for the programme might come from.

Questions and comments raised by PCC members were as set out below:

1. What funds have already been raised?
2. Do we have a scheme which would be even more ambitions
3. What is the timescale – two years to raise the money, and works timetable after that of a further two years
4. How do we work out what works must be done- churchyard, etc; works to the crypt to include a lift; rotunda, other forms of work
5. Do numbers include things which are required or those which are also equitable – noted that the bigger scheme was based both on the quinquennial and some of the community aspirations
6. What is totally critical – what would happen if we don’t do any of it?
7. Recognised a need to do the basic works like roof or else we can’t carry on worshipping or working
8. Can we learn from other churches who have had NHLF funding
9. What are obligations of trustees to preserving the building – what does responsibilities to do the work set out in the quinquennial review actually mean
10. Would we / nursery have to move out while work was done – likely yes
11. How do we prioritise nursery income given how critical this is to us, and how do we listen to their needs for safe and secure accommodation for the children in their care
12. If you only go for repairs NHLF funding is definitely not available
13. Should we prioritise works to flats to generate income
14. If we decided not to do it what options are there for the church community in terms of where we might worship
15. How do we capture the views about the collective will to do works from the whole congregation recognising the potential need to raise £2m in addition ot the maximum NHLF grant ( which is also not guaranteed)
16. Reserves are currently about 450K , of which about 75% have been earmarked for the current roof works
17. Will need a leap of faith to get the work done
18. Possibility of sequential works – can we see this a s. project where we do things in sequence and raise the money as we go for parts of the project at a time
19. Need to hear form the architect and fundraiser directly– RS will publicise any meetings taking place-
20. Ask Diocese to answer questions and to make them aware that there is nervousness within the PCC about the size and scale of the project -

Rich concluded the discussion by saying that he/ Katie will follow up on the questions raised and will contact the Diocese as set out in the questions above Action RS/KP

**6.Finance repor**t

Katie Peel presented the management accounts to the end of October . she mentioned that there were no major surprises. Flat income was still under budget because of floods and under occupation. As the building works are underway spend is now starting

It was noted that the TWS grant was still awaited, and that staff members are manging budgets very tightly.

It was also noted with pleasure that giving from the congregation was slightly ahead of target, although there was still a considerable amount more work to do.

The PCC agreed to note the management accounts

**7. Budget for 2024**

KP presented the draft budget with details of income including applications for grants which the PCC recognised are not yet guaranteed. The budget reflected work on increasing the regular stewardship giving which was still a prospective area for growth. It was noted that the Gift aid claim is currently stuck with HMRC and is being pursued by the accountants

The budget contains income lines for the flats and the nursery which is a significant part of the church’s budget. In the discussion the following issues were raised

* + Flat income – assumes 3 at commercial and 1 at missional rents for 11 month per year
  + Office Crypt income ( not including nursery) increased by 7%
  + Use of church income -KP is exploring other ways in which this might be increased via things such as possible film income. However, we also noted that income from the Belfry Tower is going down.
  + Need to check organist costs to
  + Need to review Printing which could possibly reduce the spend by £2k
  + Cleaning costs planned to be reduced
  + Subscriptions under review – Citizens , Church Suite
  + KP has looked at all the costs reviewed some , including for utilities

Costs for quinquennial works in the next year is £38k

* + Common fund contribution – PCC agreed to pay in full
  + Over all budget still shows a deficit of £50k
  + Building costs 48% and revenue 52%
  + Questions – what else can we do be ambitious and raise congregational giving –
  + Likelihood of grant funding – generally good track record but we need to pursue
  + Ability to pay Common Fund in full needs a further discussion with diocese now that we are no longer a resource church with that funding, and may need to think about a payment plan Action RS to raise with Bishop Rick
  + Review what other churches raise in congregational giving and analyse what parts of the project have worked to date – Action KP
  + Cost of maintaining the building is a major problem
  + Noted that the cost of running the church is 8K per week

The PCC agree to note the draft budget , ask for further amendments to reflect the discussion and for RS? KP to circulate an updated budget for approval by the PCC by correspondence by mid December.

**8.Policy review**

Katie Peel presented a range of both policies, which were due for review and updating, details of which had been circulated prior to the meeting. In the discussion, the following points were made

* Miriam identified the changes to the procedure internally for disclosure of any incidents and how they should be handled
* The PCC endorsed the policy that we pay at London Living Wage, together with the changes to salaries which this required.
* It was also noted that we do not currently have formal London living wage accreditation, and it was agreed that Katie Peel should seek this accreditation.

The PCC endorsed the policies presented for updating and approval ACTION KP

9. Actions

* Update on staffing for young people and OpenTable would be presented to the PCC in the New Year. – Action RS
* A meeting of the trustees of the Henderson charity was still being planned – action RS/ CH
* a meeting regarding the old mortuary was still required Action KP/ RWS to pursue
* Crypt rental- noted that it would be helpful to have accurate measurements in order to market the space more effectively. Action- JE to seek some pro bono support to do this
* Building project - Rich concluded the discussion by saying that he/ Katie will follow up on the questions raised and will contact the Diocese as set out in the questions above Action RS/KP
* Revised draft budget to be circulated for approval by mid December – KP
* The PCC endorsed the policies presented for updating and approval ACTION KP

**10.** The PCC considered a staffing matter, which is minuted elsewhere,

# 11. Dates of next meetings

Friday 1st December - PCC/Staff Christmas Party in the evening

Sunday 28th January - PCC meeting, main item APCM / Sabbatical planning /Mission

Action Plan

Sunday 17th March - PCC meeting, main item: approval of accounts and annual report

Work with young people

Sunday 28th April - APCM

Sunday 9th June - First PCC / Induction

Richard closed the meeting at 2 pm