

St George-in-the-East Parochial Church Council

Minutes of the meeting held via Zoom on Thursday 18 February 2021 at 730pm

Attendance: Tricia Bing; Alan Dorji; Jane Earl; Rob Hayward; Phil Hogan; Annadale Ramanoop (Churchwarden); Revd Richard Springer (Rector, Chair), Caitlin Harland

Apologies for absence were received from Louise Barling, Claire Moll, Francelise Mamilone, Fr Angus Ritchie, Fr Josh Harris, Ivonne Lojan Maldonado and Shermara Fletcher

1. Welcome and introductions

The meeting opened with prayer led by Richard Springer

2. Minutes of the PCC meeting held on 21 January 2021

The minutes of the meeting had been circulated and were shared at the meeting. The minutes were AGREED as a correct record.

3. Matters arising

The following issues were noted: –

- Jane and Claire have begun work on documenting the Lay community history and future plans
- The Common Fund payment for the current year will be picked up in the finance report
- Long Okada has started work and Richard will work with him on the Electoral Roll
- A group consisting of Trish, Alan, Katie and Richard has met to begin to look at long-term staffing.
- A nomination for the vulnerable adults champion is still needed
- Progress has been made on buying bibles for our young people
- We still need to action sharing the PCC minutes on the website and in the parish email to promote transparency and awareness of the work of the PCC

4. Finances

Papers setting out the current progress on moving the churches accounts to the new bank, and to Your Business Hub (YBH) had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The report noted that the management accounts presented were incomplete as a result of not being able to access all of the bank account records, but were before the meeting to give an indication of the current state of play. Rob Hayward also produced a commentary on some of the key aspects, to give the PCC the best possible information. Points covered in his report included: –

- When the budget for 2021 was prepared we had assumed that we would be back to normal, which is clearly not the case, and therefore income lines for things such as giving, gift aid, use of church, and car parking are all down on the original budget
- Income from the flat is also down, because one of the one bedroom flat has been leaked and has needed work to make it fit for letting. It should be ready for rental in March. There is also a two-bedroom flat which is about to be vacated and Fiona is aiming to have it ready to let out at a commercial rental.

- Income from NDT comes in quarterly and is not included in the current report.
- Further income from the nursery should be received by now, but is not included in the report
- Common fund payments consist of just under £32k of common fund payment, £15K for the crypt rental and just under £4.5k for electrical work
- There is still a need to have the new signatures in the bank, and to think about the best way to balance the need for proper oversight of church resources with the ability to be able to authorise payments in a timely manner. Katie is working on this. It was agreed that this should be reported back to the future PCC, to allow trustees to be fully sighted on how these two objectives are being achieved

In discussions on the figures presented to date, the PCC raised the following points: –

- A need to look at the costs of insurance, and the costs for utilities.
- Better labelling of the various budget lines, to make sure that they reflect the whole areas for which costs are being incurred.
- Clarity about the difference between clergy expenses and salaries, and ensuring that the costs are coded to the right lines
- Further work is needed on a simplification of the budget presentation, to ensure that it is explicable to the congregation
- A further discussion about our approach to rental levels for the flats, to balance our desire to provide affordable housing alongside the need to generate income for the church. It was noted that a discussion on property matters was listed as one of the next major topics for PCC meetings.

The meeting agreed to note the report as presented at this stage, and to ask that Katie would progress the access to online banking at speed, and with Rob produce an updated version of accounts for the March PCC meeting.

5. Church Practice and Church Map

Caitlin Harland joined the meeting and with Richard presented some work which had been done on mapping the current range of activities within the church, as well as celebrating those who were already taking on leadership roles. The meeting undertook some reflections in small groups on experiences of growth in the past and suggested a range of ways in which we might encourage growth for the future. It was noted that the three principles for Saint George in the East – Worshipping God - Welcoming our neighbours- Challenging injustice underpinned much of the work already underway and would be built in to the next revision to the Parish Plan

Caitlin outlined plans for four sessions beginning in April and running through to the summer for leaders of groups, to celebrate what is already happening as well as encourage co-leadership and to build further resilience and capacity for leaders of the future. The meeting supported this approach and suggested that asking people to invite others to sessions as observers would be a good way to encourage people to explore what their calling and capacity might be, without feeling that they need to commit immediately. Examples of folk such as Tom and Shermara who have taken up new projects, and then gone on to other things were also felt to be helpful as role models for people contemplating being involved in existing or new projects.

Caitlin asked for any other comments to be passed on to her as the precise form of the sessions is still being discussed.

The meeting welcomed the approach.

6. Lockdown arrangements

Richard reported on the current plans for reopening the church for an hour every day on weekdays and referred to the fact that 25 people had attended the lunchtime Ash Wednesday service with a similar number at the zoom service in the evening. It was noted that the church continues to be closed on Sundays for now, but that this will be reviewed after the Prime Minister's next announcement about easing restrictions.

7. Summary of agreed actions

- Katie to progress the online banking switch to enable up to date accurate financial information to be presented to the next meeting
- Rob, Katie and YBH to look at a simpler presentation of management accounts
- Rob, Katie and Rich to continue to review possible savings on utility and insurance costs
- Further review of how to have suitable oversight for authorising payments from the bank accounts
- Caitlin and Rich to continue plans for the church leadership work
- Review lockdown arrangements in the light of new Government advice

8. Date of next meeting

Thursday 18 March 2021 at 7.30 pm

The meeting closed with prayer at 8.40 pm