

Minutes of the meeting of the PCC of Milborne Port held on Tuesday 28th November 2023 in The Lady Chapel at 7pm

The meeting opened with prayer.

Present: Chair: Nicki Edwards (NE), Jacquie Hall (JH), Louisa Hughes (LH), Paul Springett (PS), Richard Redman (RR), Graham Sharpless (GS), Susan Wales (SW)

Apologies - Rev. Rona Stuart-Bourne, Harold Clarke (HC), Mary Clothier, Pat Elliott, June Goodman, David Grant, Trevor John, Amanda Mackintosh (AM), Linda Mumford

NE thanked everyone for braving the cold, and especially thanked RR for making it back from the Isle of Man so the meeting would be quorate.

SW had received the resignation, because of personal reasons, from Elaine Ennis-Bunt.

Approval of Minutes of Meeting held on Monday 25th September 2023 – these were signed as a true record, with no amendments.

Matters arising from minutes not covered elsewhere – The PCC now met the legal requirements for running lotteries. HC and NE are named as the promoters of the PCC of St John Milborne Port, with the address of Church House.

Milborne Wick – AM reported that Wick's Carol Service will be held on 13 December. They had had a very successful Harvest Supper at the beginning of October in the church. PS added that AM had also mentioned that the church would be unable to meet all of its Parish Share, contributing £1500 as opposed to £2200. Although PS has mentioned this to Matthew Pinnock, AM should inform the B&W Diocese of this intention. **ACTION AM**

Deanery Synod – NE had attended one of the Bishop's Autumn Visits the previous evening, which was held at Batcombe. The Bishop advised that most parishes in the Diocese had seen around a 30% drop in their income since the Covid pandemic. The Diocese is some £1.5 million adrift in its budget, as it was last year. Sadly, there are not enough individuals coming through for clergy training, and those that are coming forward, are of advancing years. However, he set his vision for the future as God's people living and telling the story of Jesus thus: Sharing in ministry and leadership; Growing and deepening faith; Valuing and cherishing the people and resources we already have; Developing new Christian worshipping communities.

Finance update – PS had attended a Treasurers' Training Day in Wells the previous day. The mood was somewhat negative, as it was impressed upon those present that any increase in Parish Share seen for 2024 is nothing compared with what it will be in the future. However, we, as a Benefice/Parish will not be expected to assist parishes that are unable to meet their share. The Diocese is continually looking for further ways to cut costs and save money. Staff turnover at Flourish House is high, with little or no continuity. He was pleased to report that Milborne Port is ahead of the game regarding fund-raising. PS continued by reporting that St John's had broken even for this year, which is a big relief. He presented an up to date summary of Income and Expenditure for perusal. The new account with Co-operative Bank is now up and running with four authorised signatories. The main NatWest account has not yet been closed. Accounts for the Charity & Mission and Magazine accounts remain with NatWest. PS will now wait until after Christmas to finalise the closure. There is still a Flagon/Chalice held for safe keeping in NatWest in Yeovil. PS failed in his attempt to obtain leaflets for the Parish Giving Scheme from the Diocesan Office. There then followed a discussion about Gift Aid.

Fees and Salaries Review:

Rachel Willetts/Greaves is presently paid £300 pm honorarium. It was agreed to increase this to £320pm.

Ronnie & June Goodman work 10 hours per week (**ACTION NE** is to discuss how they apportion their time within the next few weeks). It was agreed to increase their pay in line with the living wage: £11.44 per hour (April 2024).

Similarly with Helen Solomon: It was agreed to increase her pay in line with the living wage: £11.44 per hour (April 2024).

It was agreed to keep all the other fees (weddings, funerals etc.) at their present rates:

Heating £100; Verging £65; Bells £150; Choir £120; Organist £150 weddings, £120 funerals;

It was noted that Parochial Fees from CofE will increase by 1.8% next year.

Fabric update – JH had met with the architect today and he promised that the Quinquennial Report would be received within next two weeks.

Floodlights - Two are out of action but are also corroded on the inside, so the units need to be completely replaced. The one that is still working has a damaged box. The tower floodlight on the north aisle roof is also out of action.

Water Leaks in North Aisle – The architect agreed to installing guttering at the bottom of the north face of the nave roof to see if it reduces the leaks. **ACTION: JH** will investigate pricing etc.

Heating - The boiler has been serviced and is working well.

Infrared Heating - Herschels Infrared also visited today to assess what is needed in the way of new heaters mainly for side chapels. The Diocese recommends infrared heating as the most economical and environmentally friendly way of heating these ancient buildings.

Two replacement heaters for the Lady Chapel could be purchased immediately (to replace the two unserviceable ones) and ask Jim Brooks to install viz:-

Cost of 2 heaters	£880 incl VAT.	
Labour	£600 incl VAT	~ £1500 +

However the wiring system may possibly need an upgrade and the cost of this is not included in the above. If any further upgrade of the heating is carried out, it will certainly be necessary to upgrade the electricity supply, as it is presently only 60 amps and at least 100 amps is required for several infra-red heaters.

- Extra socket near pulpit for sound system / computer etc - £35+VAT if doing other work
- To supply extra circuit to Lady chapel altar area (32 amp). Eg 2 x 3 kw loads
£1200+VAT

Sound system – The quality of the sound during services is still proving problematic. It was suggested that receivers could be tried at a higher level instead of under the base unit.

ACTION Tony Thorp to try them on the windowsill behind the Vicar's stall. It is possible that new radio microphones will also be needed, but this is to be tried first.

Aumbrey - NH reported that a faculty has been received, subject to restrictions, and that the architect has discussed this with David Gay who will fit it soon.

A discussion followed regarding changing all the lighting to LED lamps. **ACTION JH** will obtain a quote

Website update – a date for an additional meeting to discuss the way forward will be arranged in the New Year, to include representatives from all churches. **ACTION SW** to suggest date(s) and canvass for preferred option. [Tuesday 2/1, evening; Saturday 13/1, morning; Tuesday 16/1 evening; Saturday 20/1, afternoon].

Foodshare – Nothing much of note to report although donations have dropped off from the basket at the back of church, and support is still being provided by the Sherborne Foodbank. Numbers are steady and needs are being met.

Safeguarding – NE had given an excellent talk on Safeguarding Sunday (19th November), emphasising that safeguarding involves everyone in the church family.

Health and Safety – The fire extinguishers are being checked/serviced next week. It will be necessary to carry out a fire drill during a service, but it was agreed to save this until the weather is warmer.

RSB/Vision for our Benefice – The ‘Vision setting day’ for the Benefice is scheduled for Saturday 17th February 2024.

AOB –

Service books – There are four different service books to cover the year. The quote received from Shelley’s is viz: A5 size (x4) with card covers in different colours at a total of £761 for 200 of each copy (800 in all). This will be a Benefice expense. It was decided to have 250 of each (1000) to accommodate the extra parishes as and when. All present were in favour, subject to proof reading. **Action NE**

Commonalty – The PCC acts as a responsible body for this charity. A letter had been received from Helen Pinkawa, Secretary to the Trustees of the Commonalty Charity Lands, dated 9th October, explaining that Mrs Pam Alexander, one of the Charity’s Trustees, had reached the end of her present term of office, and has agreed to stand again for a period of four years from October 2023 to September 2027. The Commonalty Charity has therefore asked that the PCC of St John’s re-elect Mrs Alexander for the aforementioned term. All were in favour that Mrs Alexander should be re-elected.

Charity & Mission – The committee had asked that this year’s loose Christmas collections be given to Christian Aid, whilst the money placed in the yellow envelopes be given to St John’s, as mentioned in the minutes from the PCC meeting last January, 2023. The congregations should be informed of this at the start of each service over the Christmas period. (**ACTION JH/NE** to inform clergy). All present were in favour.

NE queried if the monthly contribution from the PCC to the C&M had been increased in recent years. NE proposed that the amount should be increased to £350 pm. All were in favour.

ACTION PS/RR

Dates of next meetings 2024:

- Tuesday 23rd January – Church House at 7pm
- Saturday 17th February – Vision Setting Day. Venue and timings tbd.
- Tuesday 12th March – to agree accounts ahead of the APCM – Church House at 7pm
- Saturday 20th April – APCM 3pm – to include a cup of tea etc – Church House
- Monday 20th May – Lady Chapel at 7pm
- Monday 23rd September Church House – 7.15 pm
- Tuesday 19th November - venue tbc

There being no further business, the meeting closed with prayer at 9pm.