



**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of a meeting held on Zoom on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2020**

**Present:**

Revd Canon Dr Jeremy Worthen (Chairman) (JFW)	James Beck (JB)	Morag Sharp (MS)
Sally Lees (Vice Chair) (SL)	Jane Appleton (JA)	Revd Andrew Brown AB)
Phil Sibbald (Secretary) (PFSS)	Jill Humphreys (JH)	Revd Bruce Watson (BW)
Shirley Leslie (Treasurer) (SEL)	June Wenborn (JW)	Revd Caroline Mansley (CM)
Jerry Fox (Church Warden) (JF)	Ken Blanshard (KB)	Revd Eve Lanchantin-Piggott (ELP)
Derek Goodwin (Church Warden) (DG)	Lesley Wraxall (LW)	Revd Richard Bellamy (RB)
Arthur Waters (AW)	Libby Varley (LV)	Robert Sharp (RS)
Dawn Evans (DE)	Lis Webb (LW)	Sarah Ansell (SA)
Gavin Williams (GW)	Lorraine Andrews (LA)	
Helen West (HW)	Lynn Suddards (LS)	

**1: WELCOME**

**JFW** welcomed everybody to the meeting and opened with prayer

**2: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:**

Apologies had been received from Revd Dawn Stamper, Paul Needham, Laura Lawrence and Rev Cathie Aldis-Saunders.

**3: MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 10<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER**

**MINUTES APPENDIX Ai:**

**PFSS** had apologised for the lack of detail in the minutes, due to his work laptop crashing and not being able to access the recording. It was agreed by the PCC that members should email **PFSS** if they believed there was material missing, and that he would update them and we will get them signed off either electronically or at the next meeting.

**MINUTES APPENDIX Aii:**

These were accepted as a true record of the voting to approve the risk assessments passed by the PCC since the last meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

**4: MATTERS ARISING NOT ON THE AGENDA**

There were none

**5: CORRESPONDENCE:**

There was none.

## **6: APPOINTMENTS & AUTHORISATIONS**

### Appointment of Safeguarding Officer (APPENDIX B)

Appendix B had been previously circulated and assumed to have been read in advance of the meeting.

**JFW** recommended that we appoint **LW** as the new Parish Safeguarding Officer. It was explained that Lis would only be required to attend at least one PCC Meeting per year and the APCM.

**Proposed:** Rev Canon Jeremy Worthen  
**Seconded:** Ken Blanshard  
**FOR:** 28  
**AGAINST:** 0  
**ABSTAIN:** 0

The proposal was carried and **LW** was officially appointed as the new Parish Safeguarding Officer. At this point **LW** joined the meeting.

### Authorisation to assist at Holy Communion:

APPENDIX B had been previously circulated and assumed to have been read in advance of the meeting.

This document showed all the people who will be authorised to assist at Holy Communion during the period of 2021 – 2023.

**Proposed:** Phil Sibbald  
**Seconded:** Sarah Ansell  
**FOR:** 28  
**AGAINST:** 0  
**ABSTAIN:** 0

The list was approved. Phil Sibbald will now draw up the licenses for signature and inform the Bishop's Office.

### Ratification of the Health and Safety Group :

Appendix C had been previously circulated and assumed to have been read in advance of the meeting.

The group would remain the same with one addition. This would be **JFW** as chair of the PCC.

**Proposed:** Phil Sibbald  
**Seconded:** Derek Goodwin  
**FOR:** 28  
**AGAINST:** 0  
**ABSTAIN:** 0

The Health and Safety group was officially ratified for the new PCC.

### Co-option of Sue Mullan to the PCC:

**Shirley Leslie** requested that the PCC co-opt **Sue Mullan** to one of the vacancies in the elected members of the PCC that remained open following the APCM. **Sue Mullan** has a good financial background and already assists **SEL** in her role as Treasurer.

**Proposed:** Shirley Leslie  
**Seconded:** Rev Caroline Mansley  
**FOR:** 28  
**AGAINST:** 0  
**ABSTAIN:** 0

**Sue Mullen** was officially co-opted on to the PCC. She will remain as a co-opted member until the next APCM where an official nomination form will have to be completed for the remainder of the 2 years left.

## **7. TEAM RECTOR INITIAL REFLECTIONS:**

APPENDIX E had been previously circulated and assumed to have been read in advance of the meeting.

**JFW** handed over the chair of the meeting to **SL** to enable him to present this paper.

**JFW** opened by saying it had been a very enjoyable first month in post, although because of restrictions and then the second lockdown, he had not been able to do many of the normal things he would have expected to do on coming into a new parish. One of the things that had been possible, however, was to have 1-2-1 conversations with the Core Ministry team and some other people as well, and this has been valuable.

A number of themes had emerged from these conversations. First, the parish could really benefit from doing some thinking together about what our calling is and in particular how we can share in God's mission in this place – not just in the coming year but looking ahead to the medium and longer term. This should build on and help to link up work in this area that some of the Local Areas have already done. His view was that this was the most important this that we need to grapple with in the next six months.

Second, we have a very different missional context at the moment that we were in a year ago. We are in the midst of a global pandemic that is having far-reaching effects on our lives, including our relationships, our sense of well-being and our finances, which we are still struggling to comprehend. So how do we take seriously the situation in which we currently find ourselves? How far are we assuming that advances in treatment and vaccination will enable us to get back to the list of services and activities as it was before Covid-19, and how ready are we to consider that it might be necessary or advisable to do things differently in the future?

Third, there are wonderful things happening in the parish here, and some evident opportunities for the Parish to share in God's mission, including the Ignite projects and new housing developments, notably the South of Ashford Garden Community.

To address these three tasks, it would be important to strengthen our communications and give time to praying with and for one another across the Parish. These were the fourth and fifth points in the paper. Because this is such a, varied and complex parish, we have to work on good communication. We cannot hope to share in God's work together without praying and listening together to what God may be asking us to do.

Jeremy noted that there was a great deal to think about, with limited time at this meeting for discussion. He therefore suggested that the initial conversation this evening be followed up at a special PCC meeting in January that would focus on this subject and set aside other business.

**SL** offered her thanks for the presentation and said that a lot of the thought that had clearly gone in it and that it was very exciting for the PCC. There was a huge opportunity to look at how we can work together as a parish across our different churches with a united vision.

**GW** said that he welcomed the encouragement of prayer within the town ministry, but asked what was meant by working on communication. Was it about joining together in worship more often? Or was it about how we articulate what we are doing separately in each of our churches?

Jeremy thanked Gavin. He suggested there were somewhat different challenges regarding internal and external communication. As he has been preaching in different churches and attending LLTs, he realises that there are not many people who have contact with the different parts of the parish. Of course, most peoples' experience is primarily of one particular church, but how do we find out about what's going on elsewhere? How do we find out if there are people and situations in other parts of the parish that need our prayers? The challenge for internal communication is therefore partly about lateral communication across the five Local Areas, but it also relates to the PCC. How do we communicate what we as a body do? Although we put the minutes on the website, he was not aware of a regular channel for two-way communication with the LLTs and congregations.

**SEL** said what excited her about this paper is that it is from someone who is looking at us with fresh eyes and seeing us warts and all, including where our failings are, and then moving us forward. From the financial perspective, we are in a parlous state but having dealt with church finances over many years, her view was that if we have a compelling vision that is communicated well and that people adopt, then the money issues will sort themselves out.

**RS** suggested that with Zoom, which has been a marvellous tool for us within the church, we are now also reaching out to more people outside. This is an exciting ministry and he hoped that this would continue in the future when restrictions are lifted on public worship, but he didn't know if this would be feasible.

Jeremy responded that one of the things we learned very early on in the pandemic is that online clearly matters hugely, and if we are going to be able to reach out to those who cannot get to church and to younger people in particular who are not regular church attenders, then we must continue to support this. However, use of technology also comes at a cost, part of which is the time, skill and effort given by our volunteers, and we will need to look carefully at how we can sustain this.

**SL** asked about the missional context and whether we could draw on the thinking about the questions that the diocese had asked people to consider, which we looked at briefly at the last PCC. Jeremy agreed that it would be good to build on that conversation.

**JB** said that he was really encouraged by the document and also the simplicity of the language. The one thing that struck him that when we talk about the missional context, we also need to consider the demographics of the parish, where those in a younger age-bracket are clearly underrepresented in our congregations. Even at Singleton where we may think they we have most of the age range, there is still have a noticeable gap regarding 18-30 year olds.

The chair of the meeting returned to Jeremy. He thanked everyone who had spoken on this item and confirmed that he would look to arrange a special PCC meeting in January to take forward the discussion of priorities for 2021.

#### **8: MISSION UPDATES:**

APPENDIX F had been previously circulated and assumed to have been read in advance of the meeting.

**JFW** said that he read the reports with much appreciation for what is going on within the parish, and opened the meeting up to further comments and questions.

**CM** commented that children and families are by and large not re-engaging with face-to-face church services at Kingsnorth, and that this may be a more widespread phenomenon that will need further reflection in the new year. **LS** reported that things are very difficult for some families at the moment, with concerns around poverty, unemployment, domestic violence, and alcohol abuse. However, this could also be an opportunity for us to to grow our children and youth work.

**JB** said that one of the things that they have noticed at Singleton is that it is difficult to engage children and young people consistently with on-line activities aimed across the age range. There was a children's on-line activity that targeted the 7-12 year olds before the summer. One possibility would be to have two services, one mainly for adults and another for families with children.

## **9: FINANCE REPORT:**

APPENDIX G had been previously circulated and assumed to have been read in advance of the meeting.

Introducing this item, **JFW** expressed the hope that people had the chance to read the documents before the meeting and to see what a serious situation we are facing. Clearly we need to face some difficult questions as a PCC. **SEL** had presented a forecast that predicts a substantial operating deficit and then two possible ways to work towards a balanced budget, one by increasing income and another by decreasing expenditure.

Clearly, some of the discussion in the paper was sensitive, in particular the illustrations of how expenditure could be reduced. The document should therefore be treated as sensitive and careful thought given to how the situation is communicated more widely within the parish.

**SEL** opened by saying that although she had used the word *parlous* earlier, looking at the management accounts to 31<sup>st</sup> October she might rather choose *dire*. The situation has been worsening through the year and we have a net movement of a loss of £80,000. This has slightly improved with the receipt of the gift aid claims. However, what we have to remember is at the end of 2019 we only had £144,000 in our unrestricted reserves. This £80,000 loss will have grown by the end of December, because with another month of lock down and tier three restrictions in December, we will not be able to open our halls and our cafes. By the end of the year, the loss will be likely to have grown to in excess of six figures and this will knock a very large hole in our £144,000 of reserves.

**SEL** explained that cash flow measures the money that flows in and out of our accounts. It had been confirmed back in the summer that we would not be able to pay full parish share from the end of August and had therefore reduced monthly payments by £15,000. This has since been trimmed down in most months to £12,500. Our cash flow reflects that we have not paid full parish share. On the other hand, our management accounts reflect that we owe the full parish share whether we have paid it or not. As far as **SEL** is aware, that debt will stand and will be a mill stone round our neck for many years to come. She is trying to keep the unrestricted cash holding at approximately £30,000 and this seems to be a good workable figure to pay electric and water bills, salaries and expenses etc.

The forecast in Appendix G is Shirley's best guess at predicting what is going to happen in 2021, based on the optimistic scenario that there can be a return to normal levels of church activity in January. Even on this scenario, the forecast deficit would wipe out what is left of our reserves.

**JB** asked at this point if the forecast assumes we would pay full parish share, and it was confirmed that it does.

To turn a forecast into a budget we have to try and find a way to manage that £30,000 deficit and achieve at least break even.

**SEL** then moved on to speak to the part of the paper that looked at our income and expenditure streams to give illustrations of what might be required to make savings or increase our income to eliminate the deficit. She stressed that these were illustrations and not proposals. They were just attempts to show the very serious challenges for the PCC in coming up with a balanced budget.

It was requested that the notes to the Budget Forecast containing these suggestions be treated as potentially sensitive and confidential: therefore, this part of the discussion is recorded with the file copy of the minutes.

Before a general discussion took place we were lead in a time of prayer.

After the general discussion took place on the budget and scenarios, The Chair asked if the **SEL** wanted the PCC to make any decision this evening. The Treasurer replied no, as the primary aim had been to help the PCC to understand the situation.

**JFW** thanked **SEL** for all her hard work on the finances.

## **10: SAFEGUARDING POLICY:**

APPENDIX H had been previously circulated and assumed to have been read in advance of the meeting.

**LW** was thanked for taking on the role of Parish Safeguarding Officer. It is such a pivotal role. There had been conversations with Lis to refine a job description of the PSO given the particular context of the parish and to get a complementary role description for the local area safeguarding representatives.

**LW** was invited to introduce herself at this point.

Also circulated prior to the meeting was a proposed document that would be the new Parish Safeguarding policy going forward. This was shared on screen for those that had not seen it.

After a brief discussion the proposed document was put to the vote

**Proposed:**      **Rev Canon Jeremy Worthen**  
**Seconded:**    **Lis Webb**  
**FOR:**            **28**  
**AGAINST:**      **0**  
**ABSTAIN:**      **0**

The document was adopted as the new parish safeguarding policy. **PFSS** said that he would get the document drawn up for signature by the relevant parties.

## **11: STANDING COMMITTEE:**

APPENDIX I had been previously circulated and assumed to have been read in advance of the meeting.

Following the discussion that took place and the PCC meeting after the APCM, it was felt that the existing standing committee was too big in its current format. Appendix I detailed the existing standing committee and the proposal put forward for the future.

It was explained that the standing committee is there to help the PCC do its job, by preparing for and following up its meetings and potentially by having some tasks delegated to it. It would have been helpful if we could have had a document outlining the scope for that, but this could be something for the new Committee to consider.

The proposed new standing committee would consist of:

The Team Rector  
PCC Vice Chair  
2 x Church Wardens  
Parish Treasurer  
PCC Secretary (Acting as minute secretary only for this group)  
Up to three additional members appointed by the PCC to ensure awareness of all Local Areas and presence of appropriate knowledge and skills.

**Proposed:**      **Ken Blanshard**  
**Seconded:**    **Rev Caroline Mansley**  
**FOR:**            **28**  
**AGAINST:**      **0**  
**ABSTAIN:**      **0**

The new format of the standing committee was accepted.

The PCC then voted on two additional members to fulfil the agreed criteria. These were:

**Rev Bruce Watson (Proposed by Derek Goodwin, Seconded by Phil Sibbald)**  
**Lesley Wraxall (Proposed by Jerry Fox, Seconded by Gavin Williams)**  
**FOR:**            **28**  
**AGAINST:**      **0**  
**ABSTAIN:**      **0**

These two members were duly elected, leaving one potential vacancy.

**12: GENERAL FABRIC ISSUES:**

Update on St Mary's Willesborough Tower

APPENDIX J had been previously circulated and assumed to have been read in advance of the meeting.

**JF** explained that with design complications arising further with this project, it was proposed that we appoint a main contractor to oversee the project to completion and for the current church architect to administer the contract.

**Proposed:** Jerry Fox  
**Seconded:** Robert Sharp  
**FOR:** 28  
**AGAINST:** 0  
**ABSTAIN:** 0

The proposal was passed.

Memorial Bench, Ball Lane Cemetery:

On the 5<sup>th</sup> November 2020, the Kennington LLT approved Gladys Hager's family's request to have a bench installed in her memory at Ball Lane Cemetery, provided all applications and costs (bench and faculty) are assumed by the family and the bench is similar in style to the existing one. The support of the PCC was sought for this.

**Proposed:** Rev Eve Lanchantin-Piggott  
**Seconded:** Phil Sibbald  
**FOR:** 28  
**AGAINST:** 0  
**ABSTAIN:** 0

The proposal was passed.

Kennington Vestry Roof:

APPENDIX L had been previously circulated and assumed to have been read in advance of the meeting.

**ELP** is proposing to get a project manager to oversee the project and to tender out for different aspects of the work as needed, rather than the Kennington church tendering out for each individual part of the project.

The proposal is that Kennington's Inspecting Architect, David Gullick, be appointed as Project Manager

**Proposed:** Rev Eve Lanchantin-Piggott  
**Seconded:** Jerry Fox  
**FOR:** 28  
**AGAINST:** 0  
**ABSTAIN:** 0

The proposal was passed.

**13: TEAM DEVELOPMENT OFFICER'S REPORT:**

APPENDIX M had been previously circulated and assumed to have been read in advance of the meeting.

Further to the report tabled, **PFSS** gave a verbal update that Christmas Marketing had been published online and on social media and distributed by email.

**JFW** thanked **PFSS** for all the work he has done and also for being a great assistance to him for the first few weeks in post.

**14: ANY OTHER BUSINESS:**

There was none

**15: CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS:**

SEL requested that the two budget scenarios be treated as confidential. This was agreed

**16: DATE OF NEXT MEETING:**

It was stated that **Phil Sibbald** would sort some proposed dates out and issue them to the PCC.

The PCC closed the meeting by saying The Grace together.



**Revd Canon Jeremy Worthen**  
**13<sup>th</sup> February 2021**