



STANDING COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting held on Zoom on Saturday 23rd January 2021

Present:

Revd Canon Dr Jeremy Worthen (Chair) JFW
Sally Lees (Vice Chair) SJL
Shirley Leslie (PCC Treasurer) SEL
Derek Goodwin (Church Warden) DG
Jerry Fox (Church Warden) JKF
Revd Bruce Watson BW
Lesley Wraxall LW
Phil Sibbald (PCC Secretary) PFSS*
*In capacity as Minute Taker only on the Standing Committee

1: WELCOME AND OPENING PRAYERS:

JFW welcomed everyone to the meeting and opened in prayer

2: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

There were none

3: MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (APPENDIX A)

Appendix A had previously been circulated

They were accepted as a true record of the meeting.

4: MATTERS ARISING NOT ON THE AGENDA:

St Francis Car Park

The Diocese have not been there works as there are still holes in the car park and the wall is still falling apart.

5: REVIEW OF THE DECEMBER MINUTES AND JANUARY PCC MEETINGS (MINUTES AND NOTES) (APPENDIX B)

PFSS apologised that he had not had chance to complete the minutes of the January extra ordinary PCC Meeting.

December PCC Minutes:

Page 1: PFSS now has his new laptop

Page 6: Memorial Bench for Ball Lane: PFSS has an issue as DAC have said that we need to raise the private faculty for the family and that there are no charges for faculties. PFSS understood that in the past, families paid £70 for a private faculty and they applied to the Diocese direct. PFSS will look into this further as he is currently dealing with the family.

January PCC Minutes:

SJL said it was good to step away from business side of the PCC and take a broader and more reflective look. Also, how brilliant it was to use the breakout groups and that every got so much out of it.

JKF said that he said it was one of the best PCC meetings he had ever been to in his church career. He also added that Paul Needham had said how much he enjoyed the meeting as well.

6: PRIORITIES FOR 2021 – PEOPLE AND RESOURCES (APPENDIX C)

JFW said that the updated document circulated for this meeting had the first four columns the same as the initial document we had discussed at PCC. However, now it has three extra columns:

- i) Key people and time needed
- ii) Other recourse implications
- iii) Progress – this would be a particular of discussion at future PCC and SC meetings

What he particularly wanted to talk about today was the key people and the resource implications. One of the important time implications is on human resources, those who are stipendiary, those who are SSM, those who are employed/volunteers etc.

Priority 1: Mission Action Planning

JFW had previously said to the Core Ministry Team (CMT) is did need a project group or could me run with it in just the CMT. **JKF** and **Revd Cathie Aldis-Saunders** have said they would like to be part of that group. **JFW** would also like one or two younger people in the group. It is a group that needs to contribute to the process as there is quite a bit to be done of writing documents and collating information etc.

DG suggested that Singleton has a large untapped resource to find a willing volunteer. A Names(s) would be put forward.

SJL felt that if we made sub groups representative we could been seen to kicking back on the fact that we are **one parish**. Yes, get the people with the right skills etc. but perhaps not one from each area. This would send a better message. We need to foster a sense of trust for what is good for the benefit of the parish.

BW – We have the vacancy for the Team Missioner. Would this role speak into the MAP priority? Yes, the new Missioner would but we would not wait for that role to be appointed. They would join on appointment.

JFW does want the MAP to get moving as a matter of urgency.

Priority 2: Addressing Missional Context:

Priority 2a - Sunday Services: We need to look at what services we offer and what times we offer them. This would be a small group that would look at this going forward as a key item. Particularly how things will look post lockdown.

Priority 2b – Social Outreach:

JFW is happy to leave **JKF** and **Revd Cathie Aldis-Saunders** to take this forward for the time being.

Priority 2c - Finance: **JFW** had already put some suggestions forward on how this might work and had spoken with **SEL**. This would be a group that would initially come up with ideas but not make decisions. They would come up with fresh ideas that would come up with new income. This would include *Giving* but more new ideas as well.

A few names were suggested for this group not just with financial experience but also cross boundary experience.

Priority 3 - Responding to missional opportunities:

Priority 3a - New Housing Areas: **JFW** is disappointed that Churches Together Ashford (CTA) seems very becalmed on this. He had been informed that there was a CTA group that meets regularly. It has not met since **JFW** arrived in the parish. He has prompted Rob Sylvester (CTA Chair) but to no avail. Therefore, **JFW** wondered if we need our own group on this subject. After a discussion it was decided that we would have a cross parish group on this and invite someone from the Methodists to be an observer and consult The Vineyard to the meeting as well.

DG said he would be happy to serve on this group with **BW**. **JFW** said he would like to be part of this group as well but not lead it. It was agreed that **JFW** would speak to **Revd Caroline Mansley** to see if **BW** would lead this group and other names would be put forward to serve as well.

Priority 4 – Strengthening Communication:

JFW said, again with other sub groups, with this priority we ned to get some ideas generated and worked on. **DW** and **PFSS** have both offered to serve on this group. **DG** added that we need to get someone who is used to doing this sort of thing. We also need more mechanics on this as well as ideas people.

PFSS said that he was looking to recruit more people to the Parish Technology team and would report back.

SJL commented that she is of a mind that when it comes to websites and communications it has to be of the same branding. This is a highly professional skill. So perhaps we could put a tender together and go out to some professional companies. **SJL** has got contacts in this area.

Priority 5 – Praying with and for one another:

JFW said that this priority has to start with the CMT and they will be discussing this at their next meeting. Then perhaps a sub group follows afterwards.

6 - PRIORITIES FOR 2021 – PEOPLE AND RESOURCES (APPENDIX D)

JFW feels that this particular priority will sit firmly with the Standing Committee.

7: PCC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES (APPENDIX D):

JFW proposed that if we could agree, in general, during in this meeting what policies and procedures we need to have in place. We need to work out what sits with the PCC and what would sit with LLTs (for example Local Wardens etc).

Appendix D had been previously circulated:

Area	Possible documents	What we have currently	How this could be developed
Safeguarding	Role Descriptions for Parish Safeguarding Officer, Local Area Safeguarding Officer and Disclosure Officers, to sit alongside Parish Safeguarding Policy	JFW has prepared drafts based on national / diocesan templates and shared them with Lisa Webb (Parish Safeguarding Officer).	Drafts to be discussed at meeting of all safeguarding officers with JFW, then revised and possibly checked with Diocesan Safeguarding Officer.
HR	Policies on key aspects of employment, including e.g. leave, sickness, complaints, recruitment	Employee Handbook adapted from one for Diocesan staff noted at Standing Committee May 2017 but not formally approved by PCC or revised since then.	Update 2017 Employee Handbook; consider whether any additional policies needed.
Health and Safety	Health and Safety policy	?	Ask Health and Safety group to draft.
GDPR	Parish Privacy Notice, Parish Consent Form	Versions of these in use.	Anything further needed?
Finance	Procurement policy Financial procedures		Anything further needed?

Safeguarding – This will sit with **JFW** alongside the Parish Safeguarding Officer.

HR – **PFSS, SJL & SEL** will look at the reworking of the employee handbook from 2017. It was felt that a correct employee handbook will be enough and no further policy would be required. We would then create clearly defined job descriptions for all employees.

Health & Safety – The current policy (previously circulated) is pretty basic one-page policy which will need to be updated. The Health & Safety committee was purely created to cover the risk assessment checking for the reopening of churches. If we want it to be an ongoing committee, it could possibly take on the work of updating the parish policy.

There is reference to Church Wardens and Local Wardens responsibilities on the current document. **DG & JFW** recently went to a Church Warden meeting/course ran by **Jean Winn**. Would it be a good idea to get her to do something similar for Local Wardens. It was felt that this was a good idea even though she has no experience of Local Wardens. This was agreed. **JKF** will work with **LW** on contacting Robert Blount who also has experience in this field.

GDPR – **PFSS** will work on this has this within his role as Electoral Role Officer and create a parish policy for this. Previously we have used the diocesan policy statement.

Finance – **JFW** asked **SEL** if what we had in place was enough or do we need more. **SEL** said she has always felt uneasy about the £2000 spend limit at LLTs. It was questioned if we need to amend this limit or just add an addendum due to current circumstances. Looking at the Annex to appendix D previously circulated, **SEL** felt that we don't need to have further formal policies at present with the exception of the parish credit card.

SJL said that one of the biggest confusions while she was chairing the PCC was the policy on producing tenders and quote. We need clear guidance at what level do we go out and get three quotes. **SEL** said that would need an exceptionality clause that covers emergency repairs.

SEL & JFW will have a further conversation on the following policies:

- Investment
- Procurement
- Generosity
- Expenditure

BW said he would like to be a part of this group from the point of view of learning more about parish finances.

8: PRIORITY 6: LLTs AND LOCAL WARDENS IN RELATION TO PCC AND CWs

Appendix E had been previously circulated. This document was written in 2018 and it stated that the delegation of authority to LLTs came from the Church Wardens and not the PCC. The LLTs then appointed the Local Wardens.

JFW said apart from this document which is specific for Local Wardens there is nothing clearly defined giving authority/responsibility to LLTs. How do we begin to address it?

SJL said that appendix E that had been previously circulated is the start of the process. It needs more detail on the delegation of LLTs and how they report to the PCC etc. **SJL** added that she would be happy to be part of the group working on this.

DG said that people need to know exactly what a role is for example Local Warden. **LW** and her fellow Local Warden, Graham Stacey are working on a similar document for the LLT at St Mary Ashford. **JFW** added that while that will feed in to this there needs to be ongoing conversations with all LLTs on how they see their responsibilities but there has to be a scheme of delegation from the PCC.

JFW said he would write to all the LLTs asking them the following:

- What do they think their responsibilities are?
- Who appoints people to LLT and are their term limits?
- Do they have an annual meeting?
- Who chairs the meetings?

Then based on their answers others will then get involved. **SJL** will work on the *scheme of delegation*.

9: OVERVIEW OF MAJOR PROJECTS:

Appendix F had been previously circulated.

As well as the projects stated in Appendix F, **JFW** had a discussion with **Bryan Gipps** about the previous discussions at PCC about the needed works on the St Mary Ashford organ. This could possibly total £500,000. If you add this to the projects in the appendix, we are looking at spending up to £3 million in the next five years.

JFW asked how do we and that wider PCC exercise responsible governance over the co-ordination of these projects and how do we responsible decisions on what we support when and making sure we are not overloading ourselves and how do we present this information to the PCC.

It was suggested by Archdeacon Darren Miller to **JFW** that we need a development committee that co-opts people who actually know what they are doing in this field and they would present factually to the PCC.

SEL said that the Diocese call their group "Finance and Assets". Also looking at this list three of the major projects are in the South East Area. This puts an enormous burden on the same people when it comes to fund raising etc.

10: ROLE OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE:

Appendix G had been previously circulated.

JFW asked if the Standing Committee is the only permanent Sub Committee of the PCC, how does it help the PCC and how will it do its job working through finances, premises questions etc.? Whereas if we have a range of subcommittee that Standing Committee could be more focused on the following (taken from Appendix G)

1. Preparation of agenda for PCC meetings
2. Monitoring follow up of all action points between PCC meetings
3. Following up actions delegated to it by PCC meetings
4. Providing forum for detailed discussion of some matters relating to the PCC, to aid it in its work

SJL said it would be good if we had an idea if we are going with a permanent group of subcommittees or if we have groups for time limited periods. If we say the only the Standing Committee is to be the only sub group, it would take on the role of deciding when any time limited groups are needed and for how long and giving them a remit and time frame.

SEL said that there should definitely be Finance Sub Committee that looks at finance in detail and reports back to the PCC providing we have enough people who understand finance to a sufficient degree to make responsible comments and decisions.

LW said that all the PCCs she has served on in the past have always had Sub Committees as well as a Standing Committee and providing those groups are kept small they can deal with the detail and report back. If we didn't have the Sub Committees, it would be too much work for the Standing Committee.

Looking at a Finance Committee, for example, who would chair it? Should it be the incumbent or the Treasurer or someone else. **SEL** felt it should not be the treasurer.

JFW it is clear we cannot solve this overnight but we are trying to see which route we take. At St Mary, Bredin they had the following:

- Premises Oversight Group
- Administrative Oversight Group
- Finance Advisory Group

He felt that we needed at least two out of these three. **SEL** said that employment should be part of one of the groups as well.

SJL asked where would Health and Safety sit in that list or do we retain a separate Health and Safety group or would it sit under Standing Committee.

All of these are statutory groups are statutory requirements.

SJL will work on the scheme of delegation once JFW has written to the LLTs asking them the list of questions stated earlier.

11: FINANCE REPORT:

Appendix H had been previously circulated.

SEL accounts are still in draft mode but very close to finishing the annual account. There remains one issue and this is the Church Commissioners *Covid relief grant* of £650,000 that has been given to the diocese to cover non-payment of parish share. At the last diocesan Finance and Assets committee meeting, SEL had asked what benefits would be given to the local parishes

JKF asked the question about the central costs in the management account for each local area stands at approx. £75,000. If we do get relief from the diocese on the unpaid parish share, would this reduce that central costs figure. The answer was yes. **SEL** reported that as it stands our back parish share stands at £14,500.

JFW asked if there was a *reserves* policy. **SEL** said the current policy is to keep enough cash reserves available for six months. Which we currently don't have due to Covid.

JFW thanked **SEL** for her hard work on the accounts. **DG** added that the work **SEL** has carried out during these times has been nothing short of miraculous.

12: LOOKING AHEAD TO NEXT PCC MEETING, INCLUDING POSSIBLE NON-RECURRING ITEMS:

The current list stands at:

- Priorities for 2021 – people and resources
- MAP 'Review' phase – review of previous and continuing initiatives, and outline of work to be done
- PCC policies and procedures
- PCC nomination to Governing Body of St Mary's CEP
- Appointment of Parish Mission Enabler

13: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was none

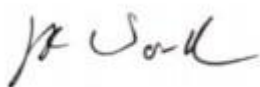
14: CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS:

There were none

15: DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Saturday 27th March at 10.00 am

BW closed us in prayer.



Revd Canon Dr. Jeremy Worthen
27th March 2021