

St Mary the Virgin Linton
Minutes of PCC Meeting held on Tuesday 1st December 2015

Present:

The Revd. Dr Maggie Guite (Chair), Mrs N Collard, Mrs S Ellis (Treasurer), Mr A Gore, Mr M Holden, Mr D Lockstone, Mrs L Mordue, Mrs S Mudge (Secretary), Mrs G Powell, Mrs J Smith, Mr J Thorne (Churchwarden), Dr M Warrington (Churchwarden), Mr M Younger.

1. Opening Prayer

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Mrs N Blackmore, Mrs H Foote, Mrs J Nightingale, Dr D Parry-Smith, Mrs R Read.

3. Minutes of last meeting

Michael Younger contested the statement at the end of item 10 concerning payments to The Beacon Trust. One of the recommendations from the F&S committee was to stop the standing order and not pay the contributions in November and December. Following the discussion in item 10 and the willingness to support further youth work, the secretary minuted the following ‘Therefore it was appropriate that the standing order was continued for November and December.’ No vote was taken at the October meeting and opinions from other PCC members were divided. The payments had been made. The meeting agreed to adopt the minutes subject to the deletion of the sentence quoted above.

4. Matters Arising

July 2014 – item 5. Online shopping – Give As You Live scheme.

See <https://workwithus.giveasyoulive.com> for information. The treasurer had received payments in October and November. There had been a delay initially as the company running the scheme had gone into administration. It is now operating as expected.

October 2015 – item 6. Choir desks – Facilities for the choir have been improved by using the stantions as book rests, originally from the front pews in the nave. Other pews in the north aisle have been turned through 90 degrees to match the choir seating. Molly Warrington had written to the Archdeacon for permission and this change can be trialled for nine months before a faculty will be required. David Parry-Smith had requested better lighting for the choir area and, in his absence, it was suggested that he and choir members should try out different lights to see what would be appropriate.

October 2015 – item 8. Notice boards – Molly Warrington reported that she had reviewed the information on the blue boards in the church. She said that she had removed the older material and, following discussion with the Rector, had labelled the five boards as follows: General Information, Children and Families, Events, Social Justice and the fifth was reserved for youth work.

5. Finance and Stewardship report

Documents circulated to PCC members in advance of the meeting included income and expenditure for the ten months to the end of October, the balance sheet, explanatory notes about the figures from Michael Younger, a proposed budget for 2016 and accompanying notes.

Regarding the income and expenditure summary, Michael Younger pointed out that column 6 was the important one to consider as it showed the variance from the actual figures to the

budget agreed a year ago. The large expenditure variance against church maintenance can be removed as funds were donated from the Friends of St Mary's to cover the major repairs. Doing this adjustment gave an overall expenditure variance of £4,322 or £432 monthly more spending than was anticipated when the budget was set. This was a much lower figure than expected and was helped by a higher income variance of £40,840. This became £23,387 when the exceptional variance in non-recurring one-off grants, due to The Friends' donation, was disregarded. This variance equates to £2,338 per month of additional income and was largely due to the stewardship campaign and the flower festival proceeds. When the 2015 budget was set, there was an expected deficit of £23,923 and it was difficult to see how expenditure could be cut. The current figures suggest that the deficit should not exceed £5,000 which is excellent progress.

Michael Younger recommended that he and the treasurer should send out 'thank you' letters in early January to the regular givers to show appreciation.

A question was asked as to whether income from letting the pavilion could be increased. Andrew Gore explained that regular non-church bookings were not allowed as a condition of reclaiming VAT on the building costs, for a period of 10 years.

Michael Younger then spoke about the proposed budget for 2016, shown on the summary sheets but also on the additional paper where he had aligned expenditure, where possible, with the appropriate income source. Sue Ellis, treasurer, and Michael had worked out figures independently and reached very similar conclusions which were then refined at the F&S committee meeting. A very small surplus of £573 was predicted.

Michael explained that the figure for charitable giving comprised £5000 for the Beacon Trust, £500 for Haverhill foodbank and £500 to US (formerly USPG) – recommended by the F&S committee and agreed by the meeting.

The figure for church maintenance included a donation of £5000, specifically to pay for a review of the sound system in church and improvements if possible.

The income figure for grants included potential donations from The Friends, The Anderson Trust and the Parish Council.

Members of the PCC thought that this budget demonstrated good progress in turning round the dismal financial situation of a year ago. John Thorne asked that a letter of appreciation should go to The Friends as well as individual donors. Michael Younger thanked Sue Ellis for her regular and accurate records. Nicola Collard commented on the proposed income figure for a Christmas event (e.g. Christmas tree festival or similar) and asked if it could be considered and developed by the events committee – Sue Ellis agreed to take it forward. John Thorne asked if the article in the November Linton News had provoked any response. Michael said that several people had commented favourably on the content but as yet, no money had been generated.

Molly Warrington said that her son, Dr Simon Roper, had offered to do a free survey of the sound system. He had experience with systems at other churches. John Thorne had separately contacted Smart Sound who installed the system. They were also willing to do a free review. The PCC asked Molly to pass on thanks to Simon for his kind offer and agreed to ask Simon and Smart Sound to review the system, preferably together, and make recommendations.

Acceptance of the budget for 2016 was proposed by Gill Powell, seconded by Michael Holden and approved by the meeting.

6. Beacon Trust Youth Work

This item was brought forward from number 10 on the agenda.

Gill Powell and Maggie Guite reported that the management group had not met since the previous PCC meeting. It was felt that although the composition of the Trust may change significantly, there is a belief that there is a strong need for youth work in Linton. Trustees had given a presentation to URC Elders and it was requested that they should do the same at the January PCC meeting as several members of the PCC had little knowledge of how the Trust operated.

There was some concern expressed at committing funds to an organisation which was currently not very transparent and did not give much feedback, but it was accepted that the Beacon Trust needed to know what level of support may be available before they could move forward and develop the next stage of youth work.

Michael Younger proposed that the PCC should earmark up to £5,000 in the budget to support youth work in the community and if it is to continue through The Beacon Trust, then St Mary's should supply two Trustees. This was seconded by Molly Warrington and agreed unanimously by the meeting. Maggie Guite said that she would be willing to be one of the Trustees and would then withdraw from the management committee.

(Joan Smith left the meeting).

7. Fabric Committee Report

Pammets – Andrew Gore showed some sample tiles which were a reasonable match for both the pale and darker tiles. It was agreed that Andrew should get a quote for cleaning the area of floor at the back of the church behind the pews and then broken tiles may be replaced.

Children's corner – The PCC agreed that switching the children's corner and the notice boards was an improvement and could be made permanent. Andrew will proceed to get a faculty.

External notice board – Andrew had received the lettering strip to add Maggie's name and contact details and it was now in place.

Flood arrangements – John Thorne is the contact for the Environment Agency and he receives regular emails and updates. Mobile phones now allow people to be contacted very quickly in an emergency and it was felt that a list of who should ring whom was not needed.

Peace garden – it was agreed to accept the quotation of £150 + VAT to bury surface stones.

8. Events committee report

Pam Richardson had circulated a paper listing future events and ideas. The PCC thanked the committee for putting so many ideas forward.

9. Deanery meeting report

Andrew Gore circulated notes from the Deanery. The scheduled synod meeting on November 4th took the form of an open meeting to pursue the People Fully Alive strategy. PCC members are encouraged to read the final version of the document on the Diocesan website to assess how it can be applied to our ministry:

http://www.elydiocese.org/index.php/download_file/view/1797/1427/1411/

The standing committee had also met to discuss the allocation of parish shares for 2016. This is still the subject of much debate and Andrew recommended that it should appear on the PCC agenda in March.

The Deanery Spring fair will take place on 5th March 2016 in Great Shelford.

10. Rector's report

Maggie Guite said that she did not have any further items to raise. The first Rector's letter had been issued and covered the seating arrangements for the choir, changing the format of the second Sunday service to introduce an all-age Eucharist at 10.00 and have any Baptisms at 12.00, the prayerful time at the start of the 10.00 service and the news that Nicola Bown will join the team as curate from July 2016. Maggie also plans to hold a number of Saturday coffee mornings in order to meet people informally.

11. Correspondence

11.1. Addition to Sidesmen and Sideswomen list

Richard and Judith Tonry had offered to join the sidesmen and sideswomen rota for the 8.00 service. Judy Nightingale had written to the secretary to request their inclusion on the list. This was agreed by the meeting.

12. Any other business

12.1. Re-appointment of Assistant Lay Ministers

Maggie Guite informed the meeting that ALM appointments were renewed every four years. This applied to John Thorne, Sarah Thorne, Sue Filby and Pam Richardson during 2015. The PCC supported their reappointment as ALMs.

13. Date of future meetings

Tuesday 12th January 2016 and Thursday 3rd March 2016.

The meeting closed with The Grace.