**PARISH OF ST PETER & ST PAUL TONBRIDGE**

**MINUTES OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING**

**HELD ON MONDAY 8th FEBRUARY 2021**

**ON ZOOM AT 8.00 pm.**

PRESENT: The Rev’d. Wendy Carr;David Balcombe; Jean Bowring; Brian Buck; Adam Calvert *(Churchwarden)*; Dianne Dartnell; Minnie Fraser-Allen; Robert Kidson; Jeremy King; Patricia King; Felicity Layton; Helen Longley; Sally Musson; Les Naylor *(Treasurer)*; David Robins *(PCC Secretary);* Mike Seaman; Ray Tanner;Paul White *(Churchwarden)*.

The Associate Vicar began the meeting with a reading from Matthew Ch 6 vv 7 - 13

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR FOR THIS MEETING.

It had been agreed by the Churchwardens and Associate Vicar that the Rev’d. Wendy Carr would chair this meeting.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Maxine Smith

3. APPROVAL OF STANDING COMMITTEE COMPOSITION.

Proposed by Jeremy King and seconded by Robert Kidson, the following resolution was passed unanimously.

***This Parochial Church Council approves the appointment of David Balcombe, Patricia King and Sally Musson to the Standing Committee for the duration of the current vacancy.***

It was noted, at Jeremy King’s suggestion, that the minutes of the Standing Committee meeting on 1st February should record these names as being ‘in attendance’.

4. CORRESPONDENCE.

David Balcombe reported the receipt of two letters from Sarah Anderson, Secretary to the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC), about faculty applications. The application to fit an overnight silencer to the tower clock strike had been given a written note of approval by the Archdeacon. The application to fit a handrail to the tower staircase had been approved by the DAC for faculty application. Subsequently, David Balcombe proposed and Patricia King seconded the resolution which was passed unanimously:

***This Parochial Church Council approves the application for a faculty to provide for the fitting of a metal handrail to the tower staircase at St Peter and St Paul Church and for the work to be carried out to improve access and safety.***

5. FINANCE AND TREASURER’S REPORT *(Appendices 1,2 & 3)*

(i) Les Naylor reported that he had circulated the provisional income, expenditure and fund accounts for 2020, in preparation for the 2020 Annual Report. He intended the report to go to the auditors at the beginning of March, and to the PCC at the meeting on 22nd March. The best estimate for the 2020 outcome was a deficit of between £2,000 and £5,000 in the General Fund.

(ii) Les Naylor also referred to the ‘Funding Story’, a document which had also been circulated to the PCC. From the list of work planned for the next two to three years he mentioned those which were the most important:

* Upgrading the AV capacity of the Parish Church for online service provision,
* Resurfacing the drive at St Saviour’s,
* Replacing the heating system at the Parish Church.

He said that he was working with Jonathan Harber, the Stewardship adviser, on suitable publicity to raise funds for these items.

There was general discussion about the timing of fund raising and work, and the method by which funds should be raised. It was agreed that priority should be given to the AV/broadcast capability upgrade, and to the St Saviour’s drive resurfacing. Estimates and professional advice were being urgently sought for the former. Estimates had already been received for the latter, and the health and safety implications for the wider use of St Saviour’s after re-opening, meant that this work should go ahead promptly.

General agreement was given to a combined approach to raising the necessary funds. The suggestion of a general percentage increase in giving to the parish, coupled with a request for specific gifts for each part of the project gathered wide support from PCC members. Les Naylor suggested that a decision be made at the next meeting on March 22nd, meanwhile AV advice and estimates would continue to be sought.

Les Naylor said that a detailed analysis of regular giving was underway, but that the total was only slightly down on previous levels. It was not clear what the effect of the information on donations displayed during online services was.

Wendy Carr thanked Les Naylor for his hard work not only on finance but also on the Living Questions vision for the parish.

6. STANDING COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE. *(Appendix 4)*

Proposed by Brian Buck and seconded by Robert Kidson, the following resolution was passed unanimously:

***This Parochial Church Council approves the Standing Committee Terms of Reference.***

7. SAFEGUARDING MATTERS. *(Appendix 5)*

(i) DBS Checks.

Paul White had circulated a note providing an update on the previous remediation plan discussed at the PCC meeting on 7th December and outlining further remediation measures on safer recruitment (see 7 (ii) below). He was disappointed to announce that, although many loose ends had been tied up, there remained one PCC member who had yet to obtain a current DBS check. It was noted that other parishes had suspended from the PCCs members in this position. He advised that he and Adam Calvert were considering similar action. In future a current DBS check would be a pre-requisite for successful election to the PCC. It was also noted that a current DBS check is a pre-requisite for successful election to the PCC. He reminded members that certifying documents for renewal of DBS checks could be passed to Mike Seaman, Yolanda Roberts or Jeremy King.

(ii) Safer recruitment.

Paul White said that the Churchwardens and Amanda Harris, the Parish Safeguarding Officer, had not been able to determine that all proper procedures had been followed in past volunteer recruitment. He intended to consult the Diocese for advice and examples of other parishes who had successfully implemented this. Felicity Layton quoted the example of St Stephen’s, Tonbridge, which had implemented a procedure for safer recruiting of volunteers.

8. STAFF MATTERS

Adam Calvert reported that he had completed the revision of the staff job descriptions.

(a) Yolanda Roberts was now using the time allocated as Vicar’s PA to assist the churchwardens and the creation of the Parish Profile.

(b) Jane Mata’s role would be covered by a temporary replacement after her departure, but there would be a full review of this area after the appointment of a new Vicar.

(c) Andy Page was now working full time and supporting the provision of on-line services in addition to his Youth and Children’s ministry.

(d) Emily Speed’s job description had been modified slightly. She has agreed to work in her spare time with Mike Harrowing at High Hopes.

9. PROGRESS ON THE VACANCY *(Appendix 6)*

(i) Running the Parish.

Adam Calvert drew the PCC’s attention to the attachment which had been discussed before Christmas. Referring to page 4 he emphasised the need for extra help in the areas circled in red: Safeguarding, Communications and Policy, and invited members to volunteer their help. He also appealed for a volunteer to take on the role of Health and Safety Officer. Currently the Property Group was having to cover this responsibility.

(ii) Recruitment of the new Vicar.

(a) Parish Profile.

Paul White reported that he had drafted a timeline for the creation of this, culminating in the Section 11 meeting which should be in the week beginning 5th April 2021. The Standing Committee had asked Sally Musson to oversee the fulfilment of the timeline, assisted by David Robins and Yolanda Roberts. Others were being asked to contribute to different sections. The intention was to present the draft contents to the patron, the Archdeacon and the area Dean for comment in the second week in March. Wendy Carr urged members to send responses to the questions put by the churchwardens if they had not done so.

(b) Parish Representatives.

Paul White outlined the intended process by which the PCC would select the two representatives. Those who wished to be considered should forward their names to the churchwardens, together with a proposer and seconder from the PCC. Each candidate would be asked to write a short statement for the PCC, who would then vote to decide on the preferred candidates. The method of voting has yet to be decided. The process will be completed in advance of the Section 11 meeting, at which both the Parish Profile and Parish Representatives will be confirmed. If a chosen representative was not a PCC member, then co-option to the PCC, followed by confirmation of the role would follow.

10. UPDATES AND FEEDBACK.

(i) Kondoa link.

Ray Tanner reported on a large and encouraging zoom meeting of about 40 in January who heard of regular news from Kondoa. The Cathedral building is growing next to the School, but there is uncertainty about the actual level of Covid infections there. In spite of interest in another visit to Tanzania it may be delayed beyond 2022, mainly because of the difficulty of securing insurance for the visit.

(ii) Living Questions.

Les Naylor reported that the initial summary is on the website, but that a full report should be available within a week. He hoped that its content would feed in to the Parish Profile.

(iii) Alpha Courses.

Wendy Carr gave and encouraging report on the two on0-line Alpha courses currently running on Monday and Tuesday evenings, with over 20 involved. The 6th March was earmarked for a joint session on the Holy Spirit. Some of those who had taken part in the autumn Alpha Course were continuing to meet for bible study on Thursday evenings.

(iv) Electoral Roll Officer.

Adam Calvert was pleased to report that, after much searching, a volunteer to replace Jane Mata had been found. Diane Thorpe had come forward and would be confirmed by the PCC in due course.

11. ROUTE TO RE-OPENING CHURCHES FOR WORSHIP. *(Appendix 7)*

Paul White referred to the document circulated which provided the churchwardens’ current thinking of the approach to re-opening in the short, medium and long terms. He reminded the PCC that our buildings remained closed until at least 28th February. It was acknowledged that there are a significant number of factors impacting any decision to re-open. Announcements would be made in on-line services about re-opening, but he emphasised that any action would initially be limited. He warned against the expectation that we could immediately re-open at the same level at which we had operated in the autumn. It was agreed that we should proceed with caution.

12. PUBLIC POSTING OF PCC MEETING MINUTES.

Proposed by David Robins and seconded by Les Naylor, the PCC unanimously passed the resolution:

***This Parochial Church Council authorises the posting of its non-confidential minutes on the parish website and in the church buildings.***

13. STANDING COMMITTEE MEETINGS MONDAY 11TH JANUARY 2021 & MONDAY 1ST FEBRUARY 2021.

The minutes of these meetings were noted.

14. PCC MEETINGS HELD ON MONDAY 7TH DECEMBER 2020 & THURSDAY 7TH JANUARY 2021.

The minutes of these meetings had been approved and were noted.

15. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING ON WEDNESDAY 12TH OCTOBER 2020.

These minutes were approved by the PCC.

16. MATTERS ARISING FROM 14 ABOVE.

There were none.

17. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

(i) The Vicarage and surrounding land.

David Balcombe reported that there had been no developments since those described in the Standing Committee minutes of 1st February. He said that there would be an electrical inspection in the near future.

(ii) Sally Musson encouraged PCC members to attend the open Deanery Synod meeting on Saturday 13th February.

(iii) Thanks were expressed to the Churchwardens and Secretary for their work.

18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING.

This was confirmed as Monday 22nd March 2021.

The Rev’d Wendy Carr closed the meeting in prayer at 9.40 pm.