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**Minutes of a meeting of the Parochial Church Council**

**Held in the Church Rooms on Wed 8th November 2023 at 7.30 p.m.**

**Present:** Roy Woodhams (Chair), Susan Clarke, Paul Jenkins, Rogan Dixon, Katherine Tuck, Sandra Keeping, Nigel Lynn, Bryn Jones, Margie Nursey, Sue Knight, Alan Walton, Maurice Bowles, Joan Connolly, John Watson, Jane Etherington, Revd Erik Heemskerk, Nicola Craven-Smith. Brian Boxall for Item 4 only.

**1 Welcome:** Roy welcomed everyone to the meeting and led the opening prayer. He said how good it was to see Rogan once again after his period of medical treatment and isolation.

**2 Apologies:** Bill Rothwell, Revd. Rutton Viccajee, Steff Shepherd

**3 Minutes:** The minutes of the meeting 13th September 2023 were agreed and signed (proposed by Maurice Bowles, seconded by Jane Etherington).

Matters Arising: Roy announced that since the last meeting Alistair Smith (a qualified accountant) had agreed to take over as Treasurer. The aim is for him to begin on 1st January 2024, and the hand-over is already in progress.

Following Roy’s request at the last meeting that we pray for members who were sick, he was pleased to see Bryn, Nigel and Rogan in better health; Bill is still suffering from severe back pain and awaiting an operation.

**4 Safeguarding:** Brian (Safeguarding Officer) had been invited to the meeting to introduce the newly published National Safeguarding Standards – applicable at national, diocesan and parish levels. The Standards remain as before, but with more detail. They are:-

1. CULTURE, LEADERSHIP AND CAPACITY. Church bodies have safe and healthy cultures, effective leadership, resourcing, and scrutiny arrangements necessary to deliver high quality safeguarding practices and outcomes.
2. PREVENTION. Church bodies have in place a planned range of measures which together are effective in preventing abuse in their context.
3. RECOGNISING, ASSESSING AND MANAGING RISK. Risk assessments, safety plans and associated processes are of a high quality and result in positive outcomes. The assessment and management of risk is underpinned by effective partnership working.
4. VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS. Victims and survivors experience the timeliness and quality of church bodies’ responses to disclosures, and their subsequent support, as positively meeting their needs, including their search for justice, and helping their healing process.
5. LEARNING, SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT. All those engaged in safeguarding related activity in church bodies receive the type and level of learning, professional development, support and supervision necessary to respond to safeguarding situations, victims and survivors and respondents, effectively.

Brian emphasized that safeguarding is a culture. We are obliged to commit our parish to the Five Standards and should display the poster that has just been published.

Roy proposed that we devote the June meeting of the PCC – 12th June 2024 – to Safeguarding as the sole agenda item and invite Brian to lead the meeting. Brian subsequently confirmed that he is available.

**5 Treasurer**

Rogan presented his Financial Report, previously circulated. He commented that the Report was up-to-date and accurately reflected the present position and where we will be at the end of the year. There is likely to be a small deficit, but less than forecast in the budget.

Commentary

This Finance Report covers the period to 30th October 2023 and covers in detail the General Fund and a summary of movements in all Funds.

Actual figures reflect income and expenditure in the year to date whilst a full year column is included to reflect my estimate of the position at the end of 2023 taking account of all expected income and expenditure between now and the end of the year.

I am still reporting a small deficit of £(3,421) for the year but as always significant amounts of the year’s income (23%) and expenditure (25%) fall in the last 2 months of the year so there is still a significant amount of uncertainty. Overall income is forecast to be nearly £17k better than budget and expenditure £4k worse than budget.

The results now include the full impact of the letting out of 22 Orchard Gardens (from 25th October) and the renting of Charts Close (from 1st June) with a monthly net rental contribution of around £750 per month to the church. However, significant one-off expenses were incurred to make Orchard Gardens ready for letting and these are recorded in the Buildings Designated Fund. Rental income, net of fees, of £3k is included in the figures for the months of November and December.

No income has been anticipated in these accounts for car parking revenues, but any income received prior to the year-end will be included and will have the effect of reducing the deficit. The only cost incurred to date has been for repainting the white lines in the car park and, as above this is recorded in the Designated Fund.

The expected reduction in the year from Regular Giving has been smaller than anticipated, gift aid recoveries from the Gift Aid Small Donations scheme have been higher, receipts from weekly collections continue to rise and Fees income has been stronger than budgeted. Other improvements including Church Room income contribute to the overall improvement to forecast income for the year. Whilst fête income was lower than in 2022 other fundraising activities via the social committee and Betty’s Tea Room have offset that reduction and in total are a vital source of revenue.

Expenditure for the full year has been reviewed in detail and as far as possible accurately reflects future costs, in particular utility costs which are now on a new 2-year contract through Parish Buying. This has resulted in savings to budget particularly in respect of the church running expenses. Total expenditure is forecast to be around £4k greater than budget but would have been lower but for the introduction of rent for Charts Close of £9k. The Mission Giving budget expenditure of £10k has been approved and will be incurred before the year end.

**6 Church Development Plan: Working Groups**

**Caring Team:**

Little Nic’s Toddlers has resumed this term with good attendance, plenty of newcomers, and we are hoping to enter a tree for the Christmas Tree Festival. Erik’s attendance is much appreciated, as are of course Rosemarie and the twins! We are also rebuilding links with Cedar Court Care Home – they hope to set up a monthly session at the Home, and also to resume bringing some of their residents to visit us on a Friday morning.

As you will know, the Social Team has been busy with the Harvest Lunch and Bingo evening, which between them raised £980 (£530 + £450) and were attended by 127 (58 + 69) people. Special thanks to them for all their hard work and especially to Sandra who did a lot of the organising. Sandra has said that she will now be stepping down from the Social Team. We particularly appreciate Nicola’s help with admin and with her beautiful posters and artwork.

**Outreach (Sharing) Team:** The report of a meeting held on 20th September had been previously circulated. Alan commented on Erik’s use of Facebook to publicise Outreach events. The publicity for Heritage Day, for example, had been seen by 800+ people and had produced a good result. Erik is willing to assume responsibility for engaging with social media during the time that he is with us. For this he will need a small budget, and the PCC agreed up to £100 for the rest of this year – to be reviewed in January (proposed by Maurice, seconded by Katherine, with all in favour).

The Charitable Giving for the year 2023 was agreed as recommended by the Outreach Team (proposed by Margie, seconded by Sue, with all in favour).

Allocation of £10,600 as follows: A Rocha, Happy Child International, Jigsaw Plus and the Cranleigh Food Bank £2,500 each; Cranleigh Community Fund and Rowleys £300 each. Collection taken at the Christingle Service to go to the Children’s Society.

The suggestion for the Lent Course 2024 is accepted in principle.

**7 Reports from PCC Teams:** Nothing to report

**8 Teams Review**

Following a meeting between Roy and the two churchwardens, Susan had produced a summary of our four Strategy Teams and the Sub-Groups under each heading. Roy described this as a ‘great piece of work’. Please find an updated version of the summary which will be forwarded as a separate attachment. The four Strategy Groups are: CARING (Discipleship & Pastoral Care), SHARING (Outreach & Mission), DARING (Buildings Development) and FUNDING (Financial Resources). One important area not included is Worship. Setting the strategy for and overseeing the worship pattern of the church is the responsibility of the Rector. If Roy sees fit, he may decide to set up a Worship Strategy Team.

The aim of this structure is threefold:

* To enable the churchwardens to be aware of all that is happening at PCC sub-groups
* To support the chairs and members of each of the sub-groups and promote their work
* To better enable us as a church to set strategy and plan for the future

**9 Outreach** **Leader Appointment**

Roy has written an open letter to all members of the church to explain the need for an Outreach Leader and ask for their financial support. We await their response over the next three to four weeks. Unfortunately this is not a favourable time for recruiting.

**10 Car Park**

Nothing further to report. The facilities should be set up later this month.

**11 Churchwardens’ Reports**

**Alan:**

1. 22 Orchard Gardens – Also reported under the Financial Report the house is now let under the management of Hestia Lettings and Property Management, Cranleigh. The letting contract reflects the remainder of the letting contract that the PCC has with the diocese for Charts Close. Therefore, the PCC will need to decide in early 2026 to either continue to let, or sell the property.

I would like to record my grateful thanks to the following people for their invaluable support in preparing the house to be marketed and let –

Tony Garston and Peter Etherington for their DIY skills

Richard Tuck and David Mann for their work in the front and rear gardens, and disposal of garden waste

Susan Clarke – carpet selection

Dorothy Walton with rehanging the curtains

1. Accessible toilet and re-ordering of the church – following the last PCC meeting as requested by the Rector, Sue Knight convened a small team which met on 30th October to commence the initial discussion to take this work forward. This discussion proved very positive. The team members are Sue Knight, Tim Oxborough, Steff Shepherd, Alan Walton and Jeff Wood. They had a preliminary meeting in church on 8th November following a Stage 1 Visit on 16th October from [Adam Heiki](https://www.nyesaunders.co.uk/ah), Inspecting Architect, St Nicolas Church. The team also appreciate the historical advice received from Brian Bagot.
2. Recent electrical lighting repairs in St Andrews room and St Nicolas room kitchen were completed by Elite of Cranleigh, who subsequently carried out work to wiring in the loft space of St Nicolas room that had been chewed by rodents. Southern Pest Control, our contractor, laid rodent poison in the loft space on 7th November.
3. Paving slabs at the West door becoming very slippery when wet. Tony Garston has agreed to coordinate the work required to jet wash and apply an anti-slip material to the paving slabs around the church that become slippery when wet. Warning signs have been posted on these paths.

The PCC approved a budget of up to £7,000 from the (Restricted) Building Fund for the Stage 1 Inspecting Architect’s visit on 15th November. This stage will enable the indicative costs of the design and building work required for an accessible toilet and church re-ordering to be identified, and this will subsequently inform our strategy for grant and faculty applications.

**Susan:**

1. Our Welcomers at Sunday services do great work and it is lovely to see the interactions that go on with all who come to worship. The duty wardens’ duties have expanded somewhat since Sue (verger)’s retirement. If there is anyone here who would feel able to join the team, I would welcome additions to the rota!
2. Parish Return – Every January we are asked to submit statistics on church membership and attendance to the diocese. These are used to highlight trends in worship and attendance across the diocese and they do give us some interesting feedback. In particular, they are looking for evidence of return to church after Covid. The figures are also used to set our Quota! I have just completed our return for October (first 4 weeks) and thought I would share some of these figures with you as I found them moderately encouraging!

2022 – totals 721 (of which 62 under 16)

2023 – totals 1039 (of which 120 under 16, 310 if you include school service)

Some of the above increases are accounted for by

Return of CofE School Harvest

Return of the Rikkyo School – something which we should perhaps think about - how we can respond to their willingness to come…

On the other hand, we only had one evening service this year in that 4-week period.

Definite signs of growth for the Discovery Service

October Discovery services 2022 – 24 and 30 - total 54

October Discovery services 2023 – 38 and 40 - total 78

The livestream at 10 am continues to be popular, with up to 20 watching live (more often around 12) and a further 20-50 catching up later in the week.

**12 Rector’s Business**

1. Crib Service. In 2021 and 2022, after the lockdown in 2020, the numbers were well down on 2019. Roy proposed (and Bryn seconded) that we hold two services again this year with a view to reducing to one service next year unless the numbers dramatically increase. This was agreed, with the comment that good marketing is required – perhaps a leaflet drop on the new estates.
2. Christmas Eve. Being a Sunday, Roy proposed one morning service only – at 8 a.m., with hymns. There will then be Crib Services at 3.30 and 5.30 p.m. and the Midnight Service. Susan seconded the proposal and it was agreed.
3. Christmas Day. Roy proposed that on Christmas Day morning there will be an 8 a.m. Holy Communion and a 10 a.m. Carol Service, but no 11.30. In recent years the 11.30 has been very poorly attended. Jane seconded and this was agreed.
4. Sir Charles Chadwyck Healy, whose family were Cranleigh parishioners, is asking for permission to install a small memorial plaque outside the church. Roy supports his request, although the work will require a faculty.

**12 Any Other Business**

Sue Knight thanked everyone who was involved in the 1170 Heritage Day. The day was very successful, attracting a large number of visitors and raising over £8,000 in donations.

**13 Date of Next Meeting:** Wednesday 10th January 2024, 7.30 p.m. There will be no meeting in February. At the March meeting the accounts will be approved. The date of the 2024 APCM will be 17th April.

The meeting ended with the Grace at 9.20 p.m.