

St Bride's Church, Fleet Street

Minutes of the Parochial Church Council meeting Held on Wednesday 13 November 2013

Present: Ven David Meara (Rector & Chairman), Gerald Bowey, Geoffrey Burgess, Rachel Corp, Eric Davies, Helen Fraser, Clive Hill-Archer, Beverly Leach, Ian Locks, Valerie Locks, Peter Longland, Rosemary Lewin, David Lowish, Ashley Painter, Peter Silver, Ingrid Slaughter, John Smith, Terence Smith, Grace Stedman, Mary Walker, Jerry Wright

Also attending: Christopher Betterton (Secretary), James Irving, Claire Seaton

1. **Opening prayers**
The meeting opened with prayers.
2. **Apologies for absence**
These were received from Janet Kitchen and Janet Smith.
3. **Business matters**
 - a. **Conflicts of interest.** There were no reported conflicts of interest.
 - b. **Non members in attendance.** James Irving, Claire Seaton and Christopher Betterton were in attendance.
 - c. **Safeguarding.** Ashley Painter reported that no safeguarding issues had been raised since the previous meeting. It was reported that training for the safeguarding officers would be provided by the Diocese, and that there was a charge for this. In her absence, Janet Smith was asked if she would email the dates of these to the other safeguarding officers and whether she would be prepared to hold short in-house training sessions. A list of individuals who needed to be CRB checked had been drawn up.
4. **Minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2013**
These were signed as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.
5. **Matters arising not on the agenda**
 - a. The memorial plaque to Brian Chappell was dedicated on 20 October and a memorial service for David Barclay would be held on 20 November.
 - b. Clarification was sought regarding item 7.b. of the previous meeting's minutes regarding costs associated with the proposed law chaplaincy. The Rector reported that the proposal was in its very early stages and that the post would be half time at St John Notting Hill and half time at the chaplaincy, possibly based at St Martin Ludgate, but under the auspices of St Bride's. A £3,000 grant from the City Churches Burial Fund had been sought to cover any initial costs. It was confirmed that there would be no cost to the parish and that any funding for the post would be from external sources,

possibly from the law firm Hogan Lovells. Both Hogan Lovells and the PCC would receive a full business plan before approval was sought for the chaplaincy.

6. Rector's Report

- a. The Rector reported that the church continued to be busy, with a number of memorials and weddings taking place. Remembrance Sunday had been particularly well attended and a busy Advent and Christmas season lay ahead.
- b. The Rector reported to the Council his intention to retire from full time ministry in July 2014 and a succession timetable was provided to members. The Rector would resign from St Bride's at Easter 2014 but remain as Archdeacon with permission to minister to St Bride's until end July 2014. Informal discussions had begun, including the preparation of the parish Statement of Needs by the churchwardens, as formal discussions could not start until the Rector had signed a deed of resignation. It was noted that the Council would be required to formally allow the Archdeacon to remain living in the St Bride's Rectory after he had resigned as Rector and until he stood down as Archdeacon. The PCC wished the Rector well for the remainder of his ministry at St Bride's.

7. Financial Report

The Treasurer spoke to the nine months' accounts to 30 September 2013.

- a. There was a projected revenue deficit of £64,000. Collections for the period were up but other donations were down. It was noted that the News UK donation received in the quarter would be the last one from the company.
- b. The church rates had been sent out and to date £38,000 had been received. A rate letter had not been sent to Goldman Sachs, as the Archdeaconry office had sent a letter at an enhanced rate of £79,000, which it was felt likely the company would pay. The parish levy would have been £32,000.
- c. Choir fees were higher and staff costs lower due to an ongoing re-allocation between the two, rather than a one off re-allocation at year end.
- d. Income from the flat was lower as the premises were now vacant. It was felt that the church should seek a short term tenancy for the flat pro tem.
- e. InSpire! Appeal - £250,000 of capital had been raised from the Fixed Income Fund to cover some working costs of the Appeal. It was acknowledged that the plan was to begin repaying this amount as soon as possible, possibly by designating any surplus for the year to the Fund.
- f. 2014 budget – this would be presented in January 2014. Both income and expenditure would be carefully reviewed, including the Common Fund contribution and a proposed £40,000 provision to cover interregnum costs.
- g. The Council thanked the Treasurer and James Irving for their work.

8. **InSpire! Appeal Report**

- a. Gerald Bowey reported that there were plans to work with small local businesses to encourage further giving and that dialogue with Hoare's Bank was continuing.
- b. Ian Locks reported that the Congregational Appeal had raised £60,000, with £10,000 raised from each of the 'Talents' and the 'Wash the Face of an Angel' initiatives. The remainder had come from donations. It was hoped that £100,000 would be raised by early 2014. An auction event was planned for 2014 with a 'celebrity' host.

9. **Architect's Report**

The Architect reported that:

- a. The project for the repair and cleaning of the tower and steeple was drawing to a close and that the scaffolding and lifts were being taken down. Cleaning and repointing of the remainder of the tower would be completed (weather depending). It was noted that public interest in the work had continued. There had been fewer than anticipated unexpected problems which had contributed to costs and progress being well managed, with a final account being forecast to be around the contract amount. There had been no issues regarding health and safety due to excellent planning, precaution and supervision.
- b. Briefing notes had been given to a lighting consultant to review the internal lighting in the church. It was hoped that the Archdeaconry would fund the specification works.
- c. The church boilers had been thoroughly serviced and tenders for their maintenance were being sought.
- d. Measures were being taken to address water ingress in the crypt.
- e. Leaf clearing from the aisle roofs would begin in December.
- f. A quantity surveyor had looked at the cost estimates for the proposed Wren Centre.

The Architect was heartily thanked for all the work he had done on the project.

10. **Database update**

Ashley Painter reported that APS Infrastructure had been appointed at a cost of £8,500. The company had also offered a business risk assessment at no additional cost, which represented a large saving to the church. It was hoped that the work would be completed by Easter 2014.

11. **Electoral Roll**

On behalf of the Electoral Roll Officer, it was reported that the roll stood at 269, with eight new members since the previous meeting.

The Electoral Roll Officer was thanked for her continuing work on the Roll.

12. **Any other business**

- a. It was noted that the church Sunday services had not been listed in the Daily Telegraph for a couple of weeks. The Council was advised that there was no guarantee that any church's services would be listed.
- b. The Council was advised that Christmas cards were now available in the church shop.

13. **Closing prayers**

The meeting ended with the Grace.

Future meetings

The next meeting would be held on Tuesday 28 January 2014 at 6pm.

Subsequent meeting dates:

Tuesday 8 April 2014

Wednesday 30 April 2014 (Annual Meetings)

Wednesday 14 May 2014 (suggested)

Thursday 24 July 2014 (suggested)