

## **St Bride's Church, Fleet Street**

### **Minutes of the Parochial Church Council meeting Held on Thursday 5 February 2015**

**Present:** Rev'd Canon Alison Joyce (Chair), Peter Silver (Vice Chair), Guy Black, Gerald Bowey, Geoffrey Burgess, Rachel Corp, Eric Davies, Helen Fraser, Clive Hill-Archer, Janet Kitchen, David Lowish, Ashley Painter, Ingrid Slaughter, John Smith, Terence Smith, Grace Stedman, Jerry Wright

**1. Opening prayers**

The meeting opened with prayers.

**2. Apologies for absence**

These were received from Emmanuel Adeniji, Julie Christie-Webb, Chris Cottrill, Paul Dyson, Valerie Locks, Peter Longland, Mary Walker and Katharine Wilkinson.

**3. Business matters**

4.1. **Conflicts of interest.** There were no reported conflicts of interest.

4.2. **Non-disqualification.** No members declared themselves to be disqualified.

4.3. **Non members in attendance.** Christopher Betterton and Claire Seaton were in attendance.

**4. Minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2014**

5.1. Eric Davies proposed and Terence Smith seconded that the minutes be accepted.

5.2. The Rector signed the minutes as an accurate record of the meeting.

**5. Matters arising not on the agenda**

There were none.

**6. Rector's report**

The Rector spoke to her tabled report:

6.1. There had been a busy Advent and Christmas period.

6.2. The Rector was developing links with the Diocese, the Archdeaconry and the Area Deanery, the Livery Companies Associated with the church (and had been installed as Chaplain to the Stationers and the Marketors), the Foundation, the communications industry (both church and third estate) and had hosted the Duchess of Cornwall's visit to the church that day.

6.3. The Rector commented on some new developments, including the work being done with children in the church and the Sunday Club, a review of remuneration arrangements, some slight changes to the Sunday 11am service, a review of church signage (internal and external) and marriage preparation sessions.

6.4. The Rector also noted that a Lent Course would be held on Sundays during Lent, that she had been approached to consider taking on a self supporting curate (which the Council agreed to be a good idea), and that the Bishop's Ambassadors for Christ initiative would be best served when more time could be given to it.

6.5. The Rector thanked the Council for their support during her first three months in office.

## 7. **Financial report**

Ashley Painter (Treasurer) spoke to his report, which had been circulated.

7.1. 2014 accounts: these would be audited over the next few weeks. The outturn was likely to be a deficit in the region of £33,000 although it was possible that a legacy awaiting payment would not be recognized in the 2014 numbers. A resulting increased deficit would remain within the 2014 provision. In response to questions, it was noted that Kieran on the coffee cart had not had a particularly good year, although it was agreed that his presence in the churchyard was beneficial to the church and that a reduced rent would be charged in 2015. It was also noted that the refreshments ran a deficit in 2014 – this would be looked at, although Sundays in Lent would again be ‘dry’ which may defray some of the costs.

7.2. 2015 forecast: It was noted that the main challenges for 2015 would be less reliance on the church rate income and the loss of a regular £25,000 corporate donation. Savings would be made due to changes in staff pension arrangements. In response to questions it was noted that the church draws income only from the endowment appeal fund, although the current yield of 4.1% would need to be reduced to around 2.5% to stop inflationary erosion of the fund, which in turn may create income issues going forward. An accounting change meant that clergy expenses were now shown as gross items. The Council also questioned whether the Office and Administration ‘General’ cost should be shown in more detail going forward.

7.3. Two resolutions were put to the Council:

- a. That it adopt the budget for 2015. This was proposed by Peter Silver and seconded by David Lowish and agreed by the Council; and
- b. That it formalise the Charitable Donations policy for 2015. The policy is that at special services the collection is divided between the client’s charity (1/3) and the church (2/3) (which in part goes towards the church’s own charitable donations). This was proposed by Gerald Bowey and seconded by Jerry Wright and agreed by the Council, with the acknowledgment that there was scope for a review.

7.4. It was agreed that a donation would be made to the CAFOD Ebola Appeal.

7.5. The Treasurer was thanked by the Council.

## 8. **Inspire! Appeal report and Wren Legacy update**

8.1. Gerald Bowey noted that the Heritage Lottery Fund had met the previous day. Some further clarification had been sought and some areas of feedback from HLF had been incorporated in the round 2 submission which was due in early March for a panel in June.

8.2. Initially £280,000 of matched funding would be sought, and three media groups had been approached. It was noted that a further £1 million would be required going forward, which would be challenging. Opportunities for engaging with other potential corporate sponsors would be sought.

8.3. In responses to a question regarding how the work would affect the church community, it was agreed to hold an open PCC meeting on Sunday 1 March to engage the congregation and others in the proposed plans.

8.4. Julie Christie-Webb had produced a report on the work of the congregational appeal committee, but was unable to attend the meeting.

8.5. On behalf of the Council the Rector thanked Gerald Bowey and Julie Christie-Webb for their work on the appeal.

9. **Architect's report**

John Smith (Architect) spoke to his report which had been circulated. In addition, the Architect reported that:

9.1. An application to the roof repair fund had been submitted.

9.2. The churchyard drains were being looked at, and would need to be upgraded at some point in the future at an estimated cost of £2,000.

9.3. The Rectory boiler needed replacing – it was agreed to approach the diocese as a possible source of funding for this.

9.4. The Quinquennial Inspection was past due, although no request had been received from the diocese.

10. **Safeguarding report**

10.1. On behalf of Sue-Anne James, Ashley Painter (Church Evidence Checker) reported that no safeguarding issues had been raised since the last meeting.

10.2. Ashley Painter proposed and Peter Silver seconded the appointment of Alison Martin as a Safeguarding Officer. The Council approved the appointment.

10.3. DBS checks were ongoing – a roll description was required for the post of Guild Almoner before a DBS check could be carried out on the post holder.

11. **Annual Meeting of Parishioners**

The Rector noted that churchwardens' terms of office are six years, and that Peter Silver's term of office was due to expire in 2015. In light of the ongoing appeal work, and to ensure continuity, it was agreed that a resolution would be put to the Annual Meeting of Parishioners to extend Peter Silver's term of office by one year.

12. **Electoral Roll**

Claire Seaton (Electoral Roll Officer) reported that the roll stood at 325.

13. **Liturgy and Sunday Evensong**

13.1. The Rector noted that Evensong with Holy Communion was not an authorised service within the church, and that it felt liturgically unsatisfactory. It was also noted that the numbers taking communion were few. It was proposed that the church reverted to Choral Evensong with the proviso of holding a full communion service if the need arose. The Council agreed.

13.2. The Rector noted that there should be further consultation regarding the timing of Evensong to see how it could best serve the congregation.

14. **Lent Course**

This item was covered at 6.4 above.

15. **Emergency procedures**

15.1. A new first aid kit had been bought. This would be stored in the corridor by the office.

15.2. John Smith agreed to carry out a Health & Safety audit.

16. **Database**

Ashley Painter reported that the database was being tested.

17. **Any other business**

17.1. The Rector asked the Council to consider how best to communicate with members of the congregation as at present there was no forum in which to do this.

17.2. It was proposed to hold a 'back to church' event later in the year.

18. **Closing prayers**

The meeting ended with prayers.