

## St Bride's Church, Fleet Street

### Minutes of the Parochial Church Council meeting Held on Wednesday 18 November 2015

#### Present:

Revd Canon Dr Alison Joyce (Rector and Chair), Revd Dr Jeff Lake Assistant Curate), Peter Silver (Vice Chair), Geoffrey Burgess, Lucy Bowsher, Julie Christie-Webb, Carole Cox, Paul Dyson, Helen Fraser, Clive Hill-Archer, Janet Kitchen, Valerie Locks, Peter Longland, Ashley Painter, Everarda Slabbekoorn, Terence Smith, Jerry Wright

#### 1. **Opening prayers**

The meeting opened with prayers.

#### 2. **Apologies for absence**

These were received from Emmanuel Adeniji, Guy Black, Gerald Bowey, Rachel Corp, Chris Cottrill, Eric Davies, David Lowish, Ingrid Slaughter, Grace Stedman and Katharine Wilkinson.

#### 3. **Business matters**

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

3.2. **Non-members in attendance.** Christopher Betterton, David Smith and John Smith were in attendance for the meeting.

#### 4. **Minutes of the meeting held on 29 September 2015**

4.1. Item 7.12 was revised to read that "Clive Hill-Archer seconded ..."

4.2. Peter Silver proposed and Lucy Bowsher seconded that the minutes be accepted.

4.3. 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 report, which had been circulated.

6.1 The Rector was congratulated on her first anniversary in post.

6.2 It was reported that the Space for Silence was working well, and that the Morning Prayer service was attracting regular worshippers.

6.3 New signage would be trialed for the donations boxes, to encourage more giving from casual visitors.

6.4 The Journalists' Service had gone well with positive feedback, in particular from the family of John Cantlie.

## 7. St Bride's – Looking ahead: vision and priorities update

Reports from the Architect, the Assistant Curate and the Rector had been circulated.

7.1 The Architect reported on the proposed internal and external works.

7.1.1 It was estimated that the external work would cost in the region of £530,000 (excluding VAT, including fees and contingency of 15.5%).

7.1.2 The internal works were estimated to cost around £213,000, lower than had been previously estimated. It was anticipated that the internal work would take approximately 20 weeks to complete and it was agreed that further discussions would need to take place to allow for as much flexibility as possible, bearing in mind any implications for using the organ.

7.1.3 It was agreed that the Architect would prepare a list of questions for the consultant to facilitate these discussions and continue the trialing work already started.

### **ACTION POINT 1: JOHN SMITH TO DRAW UP QUESTIONS**

7.1.4 The question of timing was discussed. The Architect noted that the tendering process would take about three months and that it was hoped the works could start at the beginning of April 2016 with completion in the summer.

7.1.5 The question of financing the works was discussed. It was noted that although it had been originally envisaged that the congregation would fund the internal works, a sense of 'giving fatigue' and the state of the church's core finances meant that in practice it might not be possible to raise the remaining £85,000 from the congregation. That being said, a number of suggestions were made to encourage more fund raising, including a Prayer and Gift day and other events based activities.

7.1.6 It was agreed that a small Group would be set up to look at funding opportunities from other grant making bodies, including the Listed Places of worship Trust. It was also suggested that the Appeal Fund trustees could be approached to underwrite the project. The Group would be The Rector, the Treasurer, Julie Christie-Webb (the Chair of the Congregational Appeal Committee) and James Irving.

7.1.7 The following was proposed by Peter Longland, seconded by Clive Hill-Archer and agreed unanimously:

That the Group look at ways of raising further money, including events based opportunities; that the Group source funding from other grant making bodies; that the Group, ask the Appeal Fund to consider underwriting the project.

### **ACTION POINT 2: RECTOR, ASHLEY PAINTER, JULIE CHRISTIE-WEBB, JAMES IRVING TO MEET**

### **ACTION POINT 3: JAMES IRVING TO APPROACH THE APPEAL FUND TRUSTEES**

7.1.8 Ashley Painter proposed and Valerie Locks seconded that the Architect authorize further works as required. This was agreed unanimously.

7.1.9 The following Faculty Resolution was proposed by Peter Silver, seconded by Peter Longland and passed unanimously:

The PCC of St Bride's Church requests a Faculty to proceed with the redecoration, cleaning and restoration of the interior of the building as outlined in the church Architect's report dated 9 November 2015.

7.1.10 A discussion on the communication of the decisions taken at the meeting was held. It was agreed that notices would be placed in the Sunday service sheets from Advent Sunday until Christmas with follow up work carried out in January. A 'meet the Architect (and consultant)' session would be held in early February to continue engaging the congregation.

7.1.11 It was further agreed that large posters seeking support or information about sources of finance would be placed in the church and in service sheets during the Advent carol services.

7.1.12 One member noted that information on the Thompson Family Charitable Trust had been sent to the office, but that no reply had been received and no follow up work had been undertaken. The Rector agreed to pursue this.

**ACTION POINT 4: RECTOR, GLORIA, JULIE CHRISTIE-WEBB, JOHN SMITH  
TO PRODUCE SERVICE SHEET WORDING  
ACTION POINT 5: RECTOR TO FOLLOW UP ON THOMPSON TRUST**

7.2 The Assistant Curate spoke to his report on how to serve the external community.

7.2.1 A number of options were suggested in the paper, including engaging with SPEAR (encouraging young people into employment) and further engagement with St Andrew by the Wardrobe, and their new incumbent the Venerable (to be) Luke Miller.

7.2.2 It was agreed by members that the focus should be on time giving rather than money giving and that the church should assist SPEAR with interview training and encouraging volunteers to assist with refreshments after Nine Lessons and Carols on 20 December. A note would also be put in the Sunday service booklet asking for support.

**ACTION POINT 6: JEFF LAKE TO LIAISE WITH SPEAR AND PRODUCE WORDING**

7.2.3 The relationship with St James' School in Zongoro, Zimbabwe was raised. It was noted that it might still be difficult for the School to liaise with the church, and that James Irving would be asked to report back to the PCC.

**ACTION POINT 7: JAMES IRVING TO REPORT ON ST JAMES' SCHOOL**

7.2.4 It was agreed that a session would be arranged with the Ven (to be) Luke Miller to discuss further outreach opportunities.

**ACTION POINT 8: RECTOR TO ARRANGE MEETING WITH VEN LUKE MILLER**

7.3 The Rector spoke to her report on branding.

7.3.1 It was noted that the area of branding would need to be part of a wider discussion including the website and other areas.

7.3.2 It was agreed that this would be re-visited in mid-2016 once the Communications strategy had been agreed.

## 8. Financial report

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

8.1 The Treasurer reported that the expected budget deficit remained at £5,000 with a variance of ±£20,000. There had been a fall in income, notably collections and parochial fees, some of which had been offset by reduction in expenditure. It was noted that the house sale relating to the expected inheritance was due to complete in the month, with the money to be transferred soon after.

8.2 The Treasurer presented the draft 2016 budget.

8.2.1 In response to questions, the Treasurer noted that the cost of the broadband was included in the IT line. This expenditure was reviewed in 2014 and, in line with all expenditure items, would be reviewed at contract renewal. The VAT paid on fuel was subsequently confirmed to be at 5%.

8.2.2 The budget figure for charitable giving was 1/3 of estimated collections at special services, which was designated by the organisers of those services. It was confirmed that the church currently did not make charitable giving donations from its own resources, in that the church was the legal entity channel through which organisers of special services designated their preferred charities.

8.2.3 A discussion on common fund was held. The contribution to the fund was a voluntary amount used to fund the work of the diocese and the national church. The amount of the contribution was questioned by some members although it was noted that in return the parish could make much better use of the services provided by the diocese in the future. The amount was agreed in June each year for the follow year.

8.2.4 It was agreed that follow up work should be done on legacy giving. The Rector noted that Ben Alonso would be invited to a meeting to talk about this area of giving.

**ACTION POINT 9: RECTOR TO INVITE DIOCESAN OFFICIAL TO TALK ABOUT LEGACY GIVING**

8.3 Helen Fraser proposed and Lucy Bowsher seconded that the PCC accept the 2016 working budget. This was agreed unanimously.

8.4 Ashley Painter proposed Clive Hill-Archer seconded that the PCC asks the Trusts to provide information to the Council on current performance and future investment policy. This was agreed unanimously.

**ACTION POINT 10: JAMES IRVING TO ASK THE TRUSTEES FOR INFORMATION**

8.5 Ashley Painter was thanked for his work on the finances.

**9. Architect's report**

John Smith (Architect) spoke to his report which had been circulated.

9.1. Work on the heating controls in the crypt had been completed. It was noted that it was still very warm in the crypt and that this would be looked at.

**ACTION POINT 11: JOHN SMITH TO ASK JAMES IRVING TO CHECK THE CRYPT HEATING**

9.2. It was expected that the Quinquennial was due to be completed in the next few weeks.

9.3. It was reported that the fire alarm system would need to be replaced in 2016, at a cost of about £20,000. The work would be scheduled to be completed before the redecoration of the church began. A proposal would be put to the January 2016 meeting.

**ACTION POINT 12: JOHN SMITH TO PRODUCE PROPOSAL FOR FIRE ALARM WORK**

**10. St Bride's and Communications**

Julie Christie-Webb spoke to her paper, which had been circulated.

10.1. A number of suggestions were made to enhance the church's communications, including foreign language leaflets (it was noted that these had been produced in the past) and an enhanced mobile application.

10.2. Clive Hill-Archer proposed and Eve Slabbekoorn seconded the following proposals put to the meeting. These were agreed unanimously.

Set up a time-limited, task-focused Communications Working Group to scope out and prepare a St Bride's Communications Strategy and outline Implementation Plan for decision by the PCC. This option enables a strategic lead and a group to hold the vision of St Bride's through better communications. The Group is task focused and its membership brings together interested and passionate people from across St Bride's. The Strategy is 'owned' by St Bride's.

Communications is a standing item on the PCC agenda for reports on progress against targets, success stories, challenges and next steps for solutions. This option keeps the PCC informed and on board with communications development, and an opportunity to feedback views on changes.

10.3. A small Group was formed to further the communications work, comprising the Rector, Julie Christie-Webb, Paul Dyson, Clive Hill-Archer, Eve Slabberkoorn and Jerry Wright, which would meet in in December.

**ACTION POINT 13: GROUP OF SIX TO MEET IN DECEMBER**

**11. Safeguarding report**

The safeguarding team report had been circulated. No safeguarding issues had been raised since the last meeting.

**12. Deanery Synod report**

The Deanery Synod report had been circulated.

**13. Electoral Roll**

The Electoral Roll report had been circulated. There had been no changes since the previous meeting and the roll stood at 332. It was noted that wedding couples were no longer required to join the roll, but were invited to do so.

**14. Any other business**

The Rector noted that the new Archdeacon had requested dates to visit each parish in the Archdeaconry. A number of dates had been proposed (13 March, 24 April and 22 May) and it was agreed that the April date would be most convenient for St Bride's.

**ACTION POINT 14: JAMES IRVING TO ARRANGE VISITATION FOR 24 APRIL**

**15. Staffing issues**

Separate note to be circulated separately, including some post-meeting information.

**16. Closing prayers**

The meeting ended with prayers.

**Next meeting:**

Tuesday 26 January 2016 starting at 6.05pm