

## St Bride's Church, Fleet Street

### Minutes of the Parochial Church Council meeting Held on Tuesday 15 March 2016

#### Present:

Revd Canon Dr Alison Joyce (Rector and Chair), Revd Dr Jeff Lake (Assistant Curate), Peter Silver (Vice Chair), Emmanuel Adeniji, Guy Black, Gerald Bowey, Julie Christie-Webb, Chris Cottrill, Carole Cox, Eric Davies, Paul Dyson, Helen Fraser, Clive Hill-Archer, Janet Kitchen, Valerie Locks, Peter Longland, Ashley Painter, Everarda Slabbekoorn, Ingrid Slaughter, Terence Smith

#### 1. Opening prayers

The meeting opened with prayers.

#### 2. Apologies for absence

These were received from Lucy Bowsher, Geoffrey Burgess, Rachel Corp, David Lowish, Grace Stedman, Katharine Wilkinson, Jerry Wright

#### 3. Business matters

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

3.2. **Non-members in attendance.** Christopher Betterton, James Irving and John Smith were in attendance for the meeting; Mick Hicks (Crowe Clark Whitehill, auditor) for item 6.

Item 6 on the agenda was taken at this point in the meeting.

#### 6. Financial report

##### a) Management accounts

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

6.1 It was noted that the 2015 surplus was £11,477 and that unrestricted funds were £92,535 at the year end, in line with the PCC policy.

6.2 It was noted that 2015 represented a good baseline for future years, although cost savings in choir and staff costs were also offset by reductions in Church Rate income.

6.3 In response to a question it was noted that the reduction in publicity costs in 2015 was due to higher 2014 spending, in particular on the database.

##### b) Presentation of annual report and accounts

The Treasurer spoke to the audited annual report and accounts

6.4 It was noted that there had been some changes in the presentation of some items:

6.4.1 Staff and choir costs had in previous years been recorded as net expenditure. In 2015 the expenditure and any associated income were shown gross. As a result the total income and expenditure figures were higher than previously reported in the management accounts.

6.4.2 It was also noted that the staff costs excluded the Director of Music and 50% of the Administrator's costs (these being recorded as choir costs). Both roles were included in the number of staff employed.

6.5 The Council was reminded that some of the St Bride's trust funds were incorporated into the Appeal Trust during the year and that other Trusts would be incorporated during 2016.

6.5.1 It was noted that the PCC relies on the support trusts for some of its income and that one of the challenges would be to increase income from other sources to avoid drawing down on the income of the Appeal Trust.



6.5.2 It was also noted that the report and accounts acknowledged that there was a risk associated with the PCC relying on the Appeal Trust for income.

6.6 It was noted that the church was required to identify other areas of potential risks, including reputational risk; it was noted that the Communications Working Group would work to assist mitigating this risk.

6.7 In response to a question, it was noted that the donations listed were gifted from collections at services.

**c) Audit report**

6.8 Mike Higgs (auditor) noted some changes to auditing standards which had come into force as part of the audit. There were no audit issues reported.

**d) 2016 budget**

6.9 The Treasurer noted that the PCC was budgeting for a £20,000 deficit in 2016.

6.10 In response to a question it was reported that a flat rent review was due in June 2016.

6.11 Peter Silver proposed and Helen Fraser seconded that the annual report and accounts be accepted. The proposal was unanimously agreed.

6.12 The Council expressed its thanks to Ashley Painter (Treasurer), James Irving (Head of Operations) and the auditors for their work on the annual report and accounts.

**4. Minutes of the meeting held on 26 January 2016**

4.1. Gerald Bowey proposed and Peter Silver seconded that the minutes be accepted.

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

**5. Update on action points and matters arising not on the agenda**

**a) Update on action points**

5.1 AP1. St James' School, Zongoro. James Irving would ask for further photographs, including some of the school children using the educational facilities.

5.2 AP5. Rectory heating. The Rector noted that the Diocese was due to complete some other work on the Rectory and that the heating issues would be raised when this work had been carried out.

**b) Matters arising**

5.3 There were none.

**7. Rector's Report**

The Rector spoke to her report, which had been circulated.

7.1 The Rector noted that she had been elected to the Diocesan Finance Committee.

7.2 The Rector noted that the Revd Mark Fox had expressed an interest in joining the clergy team at St Bride's, as a self-supporting minister, with the Rector offering any necessary support.

It was proposed to seek a Permission to Officiate certificate from the Bishop and review the appointment after one year. It was noted that Mr Fox would be primarily involved in the weekday ministry of the church, which would complement the ministry of Revd Dr Jeff Lake, who was generally available at weekends. The Council was supportive of the proposal.

**8. St Bride's – Looking ahead**

**a) Interior works update**

8.1 The Architect reported that pre-contract meetings had taken place the previous week, and that the scaffolding arrangements had been amended. It was noted that the work would start on 29 March and that a quantity surveyor had been appointed.

8.2 Although some costs remained unconfirmed, it was noted that the cost of new kneelers and cushions was lower than had been estimated. Carole Cox was thanked for her repair work on the existing kneelers.

8.3 It was noted that some work on the pews would be completed post contract.

**b) Exterior works and fundraising**

8.4 Gerald Bowey reported that discussions were ongoing with various organisations with a view to restoring the exterior.

**c) Crypt project and fundraising**

8.5 It was noted that work on the crypt project continued but that there was nothing specific to report to the Council.

**d) Great Fire of London anniversary**

8.6 The Rector noted that she had received information from the Museum of London (MoL) on its programme of events and that she was arranging a meeting with MoL regarding the church's involvement.

8.7 James Irving noted that the annual parish event would take place in September in the church and churchyard and would involve musical items.

8.8 It was noted that the Tinniswood book was on sale in the bookshop and that the Wren Lecture would be given on 14 June.

**9. Architect's report**

**a) Report**

The Architect spoke to his report, which had been circulated.

9.1 It was noted that the drains repair work had started and the roof lining was being installed, although the guttering work would be carried out in more clement weather.

9.2 The architect reported that quotes on the work to the fire alarm were due, and the work would cost in the region of £17,000.

9.3 It was noted that quotes to repair the west doors bolts were awaited.

9.4 It was noted that quotes on work to the boilers were awaited.

**b) Quinquennial**

9.5 The quinquennial report had been received by the Architect and would be circulated shortly.

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

**a) Communications strategy**

Julie Christie-Webb spoke to her paper and the draft Communications Strategy, which had been circulated.

10.1 The Strategy was intended to be a foundation document, which had references the recent Mission Action Plan.

10.2 It was intended that a communications plan would follow and would be centered around SMART objectives to ensure it achieved its aims.

10.3 It was noted that the plan would have implications on a number of areas, including finance, HR, legal and IT.

10.4 In response to a question it was agreed to review the 2020 Vision work, to potentially incorporate some of the work from the 2008 document.

10.5 It was noted that branding was being reviewed.

10.6 Revd Dr Jeff Lake proposed and Valerie Locks seconded that the Council adopt the Communications Strategy. The proposal was unanimously agreed.

**b) Database**

The Rector spoke to her paper, which had been circulated.

10.7 It was reported that the Rumbles Report on the database would be circulated when some minor amendments had been completed.

10.8 It was noted that the PCC had undertaken proper due diligence and that references had been sought for the work.

10.9 It was reported that £8,500 had been spent on the database, with 25% of the fee withheld until the system was fully useable, which it currently wasn't.

**11. Volunteer events**

11.1 The Rector noted that for some fundraising events to take place volunteers were needed to organise and deliver them. These included the MacMillan Coffee morning and Lord Mayor's Show open day.

**12. Bishop's Lent Appeal**

12.1 The Rector reported that £850 had been raised to date.

12.2 The Rector noted that Margherita Watt, a member of the congregation who worked for Save the Children, had offered some suggestions about how best to support the migration crisis in Europe.

**13. Q&A on items for deemed approval or for information**

13.1 **Safeguarding.** Katharine Wilkinson, Children's Champion, had reported to the Rector in response to a request from the Diocese to all parishes, for additional information from children regarding their experience of attending church.

13.2 **Electoral Roll.** On behalf of the Electoral Roll Officer, it was noted that updated roll figures would be available at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting.

13.3 **Churchwarden succession.** It was noted that a version of the churchwardens' note could be included in the Sunday Service booklet.

13.3.1 It was noted that one option to assist the transition between churchwardens was to propose at the Annual Meeting of Parishioners (AMoP) that churchwardens serve a maximum of four years, rather than the legal maximum of six years, going forward.

13.3.2 Peter Longland suggested and Everarda Slabbekoorn seconded the suggestion that this proposal be put to the AMoP as convention in the parish. The Council agreed to this suggestion.

13.3.3 It was further noted that in order to better facilitate this proposal, the AMoP would be asked to approve churchwarden Jerry Wright be able to stand for an additional year, to prevent two churchwardens standing down this year. The Council concurred with this suggestion.

**14. Any other business**

14.1 There was none

## **Trustee only matters**

### **15. HR audit.**

15.1 The Rector reported that the HR Group had met three times and that the office staff had been approached to seek their views on staffing matters.

15.2 It was noted that a staff review and appraisal process was ongoing and Council members requested that these include professional as well as personal development going forward.

15.3 The Rector reported that she and Peter Silver had met with Gill Taylor to discuss the proposed way forward and that a Brief would be emailed to Council members for approval before being sent to Ms Taylor.

15.4 In discussion it was requested that Gill Taylor should not be limited in her approach to her review, and that she should be free to make recommendations, which the Council could choose to accept or reject.

15.5 It was noted that the review could take four or five days, which would cost in the region of £3,500.

15.6 Gerald Bowey proposed and Paul Dyson seconded that Gill Taylor be asked to carry out an HR audit as agreed. The proposal was unanimously agreed.

### **16. Staff attendance at meetings**

16.1 A paper from Clive Hill Archer had been circulated on the subject of whether staff should routinely be present at meetings

16.2 The Rector noted that the HR audit would also focus on this point and it was agreed that further discussion would await the publication of the HR audit report.

16.3 It was reported that at other charities staff attendance at trustee meetings was seen to be helpful and that their presence was not regarded as compromising the primacy of trustees, who acted as decision makers.

### **17. Closing prayers**

17.1 The meeting ended with the Grace.

### **Next meeting:**

Annual Church Meetings Monday 25 April 2016 starting at 6.00pm

An induction meeting for the new PCC would follow the Annual Church Meetings