**St George-in-the-East Parochial Church Council**

**Minutes of the meeting held on Sunday 20 March 2022 at 12 noon**

Attendance: Tricia Bing; Nathaniel Darling; Jane Earl; Hannah Edwards; Revd Alanna Harris; Rob Hayward ; Phil Hogan; Ivonne Lojan Maldonado; Francelise Mamilonne; Annadale Ramanoop; Revd Richard Springer (Rector, Chair), Hannah Edwards

Apologies for absence were received from Alan Dorji; Fr Angus Ritchie, and Fr Josh Harris,

**1.  Welcome and introductions**

The Rector welcomed colleagues to the meeting of the PCC. Hannah Edwards and Nathaniel were observing the meeting with a view to joining the PCC. The Rector opened the meeting with prayer.

**2. Minutes of the PCC meeting held on 6 December 2021**

The minutes of the meeting had been circulated and were shared at the meeting. With the amendment of Alanna’s name to read Revd Alanna Harris and an updating of the minute numbers, the minutes were AGREED as a correct record.

3. **Matters arising**

The following issues were noted: –

* On safeguarding training Rich reported that Claire Deegan was still acting as Safeguarding officer but was about to move house and leave the Parish, A new Safeguarding officer was therefore required and he asked the PCC to think about potential candidates , recognising that the systems are now well established
* Stella will review in May the Vulnerable adults champion role– RS to follow up
* Rich had written to YBH, our accountants, to alert them to our concerns, and reported that this had been well received.
* All of the administrative matters covered at the last meeting had now been dealt with by Katie
* Rich reported that Ramond has been offered a new job with a charity which will mean that he needs to resign from his current role. The PCC expressed thanks to him for all his work and contribution to the life of the church. It was also agreed that the questionnaire he drafted should still be circulated, as part of the preparation of thinking about the job description for his replacement. – Action RS

**4. Property matters**

Alanna left the meeting during consideration of this item

The PCC considered a paper which set out the current position on funding of housing for curates, and updating them on a meeting which had taken place with the Archdeacon and colleagues in the Diocese responsible for housing. The paper proposed that the additional year cost of accommodation for Josh and Alanna as a result of maternity leave should be underwritten by the PCC until such time as Alanna’s curacy ends. It was noted that as a result of the way in which housing costs for curates who are on maternity or other forms of leave lie with parishes, the PCC would face additional costs.

In discussion the way in which curacy housing costs are dealt with was noted, and that one way to achieve a more equitable settlement recognising the responsibility of the wider C of E might be to seek a reduction in the Common Fund payment for the next year. There was also a question about whether the church can have insurance against additional costs for covering maternity or other special leave of the staff team

The PCC

1. APPROVED the proposal set out in the paper and authorised Katie Peel to implement the arrangements outlined.
2. AGREED to write to the Archdeacon to say that the PCC is in favour of seeking some way of achieving a better financial balance between the Parish and Diocese to the issue of support for, in this case , maternity costs as part of a curates placement, and that this might be achieved by means of a reduced common fund contribution.
3. To ask Katie to explore whether it is possible to have insurance against costs of maternity and other forms of leave for the future - ACTION KP

**5. Eco church update**

The PCC were reminded about the work and away from the climate action group to seek eco-Church accreditation. It had been hoped to bring a further report to this meeting, but as a result of job changes for a number of the volunteers in this group, the work whilst proceeding was moving more slowly than had been originally intended.

The PCC thanked the climate action group for the work which is underway, confirmed continued support for the process, and asked for a report at an appropriate meeting. ACTION JE

**6. Finance matters**

Rob Hayward, the PCC treasurer presented the summary papers which have been circulated prior to the meeting. They presented a picture of the first two months of the financial year, and represented a better picture than had been expected at this point, largely due to the fact that much of the expenditure on the building has not yet been contracted. Individual giving was up on budgeted expectations, and with some areas of expenditure not yet as high as anticipated, the position currently looked positive.

In discussion, the following points were raised: –

* The graphs to represent the current position were helpful
* It would be useful to add to the table a column representing what was spent in the previous year at the same time, to give the PCC better sight of year on year comparisons
* Fundraising was looking positive, with good indications from Trinity Wall Street for further funding, and a number of other grant applications in the pipeline.
* Whether the damage caused by the storm to the church building was covered by insurance
* What the progress was on developing an income stream from use of the car park
* What our aims for balancing income and expenditure are – it was noted that our ambition is to broadly keep these two things in balance, and to be able to spend money on mission as well as buildings.
* The need to have a clear policy and procedure about the electronic giving at Sunday services, and to ask Katie to establish a procedure to ensure that this happens reliably

The PCC NOTED the management accounts and thanked the team for the work which had gone into producing them.

**7. Route to the APCM**

A paper setting out the key dates to be APCM on 15th May had been circulated in advance. The PCC noted the key dates, and discussed the process for signing off the statutory accounts. It was noted that the initial draft was due on 22nd March, although the narrative was still to be written. In order to ensure that the PCC could scrutinise and approve these accounts for submission to the APCM, it was AGREED that they would initially be circulated by email. If it was felt that a formal meeting was needed to discuss them, this would take place on Sunday 24th April at 12 noon.

It was also noted that the APCM would have to formally approve the statutory accounts for 2020, because they had been signed off by the PCC due to their late receipt from the accountants in that year.

**8. Policy review**

Three policies have been circulated to the PCC in advance of the meeting. Each of them were considered, as follows: –

* Health and safety – the updated policy was circulated, and it was agreed that Jane Earl would become the accountable member of the PCC to be named in the policy. It was also noted that there was a spelling error in Fran’s name in the document, and that the address should be updated. With these additions, the policy was APPROVED and Katie Peel was asked to circulate and publicise appropriately
* Employment – the updated policy was presented. Following comments and discussion, it was agreed that:

1. Section B on recruitment should have an additional sentence at which it will be made clear that whether or not there was a requirement for a practising Christian to be appointed to each role would be determined by the PCC
2. In the section on grievances, an additional paragraph should be inserted to make it clear that the ambition should be to have any grievances dealt with at the earliest possible opportunity and as informally as appropriate before stepping into the more formal parts of the process

With these amendments, the updated policy was APPROVED

* Bullying and harassment – it was noted that this policy was drafted by the diocese, and the document was APPROVED

**9. Support for refugees**

Following a request from Phil Hogan to discuss this matter, Katie had produced a brief paper setting out some of the things which we as a church might be able to do to support refugees coming from Ukraine, but also those from other parts of the world who are also seeking refuge.

In discussions, the PCC endorsed the responsibility of the church to support people who might come as refugees. Recognising that the current Government scheme required individuals to find their own partners and being mindful that there may already be people in our community who have offered to host families, we agreed that, as a first step we would use our social media (Twitter and Facebook )to offer support to people already hosting refugees within the area, and think about how we might use our resources of things such as Open Table and our community networks to offer support, hospitality, and friendship to newly arrived refugees.

**10** **. Actions**

* All to search for Safeguarding officer and Vulnerable Adults Champion
* RS/KP to update on grant applications at June meeting
* RS/KP to write to the archdeacon about common fund reduction
* RS to continue to remind congregation about individual giving
* KP to circulate the statutory accounts when received, and to consider whether an additional PCC is needed for 24 April – JE
* KP to follow up on the policy and other actions discussed by the PCC
* RS/KP to establish whether there are ways on which we can support hospitality for refugees

**10. Date of next meeting**

Unless the additional PCC in April on 24 April is needed, the next meeting of the PCC will be held on 19 June at 12 noon. The APCM will be held on 15 May.

The meeting closed with prayer at 1.15 pm