

**Parochial Church Council
Minutes of meeting held on 23rd May 2017**

1. **Welcome and prayers:** The Vicar welcomed all, including new PCC member Derek Mertling-Blake, who had last served on a PCC fifty-five years ago. He also welcomed Zoe Challenor and David Hill. Tim Merrifield was welcomed upon his arrival later in the meeting. The meeting opened with prayer for the people of Manchester following the concert attack the previous evening, remembering all those bereaved or injured.
2. **Attendance:** The Revd Julian Francis (Chair), Carol Austin, Carol Couse, Philip Couse, Anne Game, Nick Gibbs, Simon Kirby, Derek Mertling-Blake, Justin Pinkess, John Russell, Caroline Shaw, Jenny Uff, Charles Williams, Pat World. **Apologies:** Susan Booth, Marion Clarke, Maggi Cull, Kirsty Butler, John Hurman **Visitors:** Zoe Challenor, David Hill, Tim Merrifield
3. **Minutes of the PCC meeting on 14th March 2017:** were approved with the following amendment and duly signed: Future Events – The Revd Simon Thorburn to retire June 30th 2017 not 3rd June.
4. **Matters arising:**
 - 4.1. Safeguarding – the Diocesan Self-Declaration Form had been circulated to all PCC members for completion. The Vicar said that there is a further form to be filled in. A declaration that all elected members of the PCC and Deanery Synod are each a 'fit and proper person' to undertake the role. This is a requirement of the Charity Commission. The Vicar said that there is a need for a DBS evening to clarify the process and to provide guidance on completing the second form, which will be distributed to members.
 - 4.2. Update re Malawi – Violet's university fees. The vicar confirmed that £1129.74 had been donated and that this will meet all Violets needs this year. The money has been transferred to Malawi and all involved copied into emails effecting the transfer.
5. **APCM Matters:**
 - 5.1. Election & co-options
 - 5.1.1. Election to PCC - Carol Austin, nominated by Susan Booth and seconded by Charles Williams was duly elected to PCC.
 - 5.1.2. Co-options - Anne Game proposed and Charles Williams seconded that Susan Booth be cop-opted to PCC. This was approved unanimously. It was noted that there is still one vacant place for a PCC member and also a Deanery Synod member. It was agreed that both to be advertised on the weekly pew sheet.
 - 5.1.3. Election of Officers
 - Vice Chair – Simon Kirby stated that he was willing to serve and as there was no other nominations SK was duly elected.
 - Treasurer – John Russell stated that he was willing to serve and as there were no other nominations JR was duly elected.
 - Secretary – Susan Booth had stated prior to the meeting that she was willing to serve and as there were no other nominations SB was duly elected.
 - 5.2. Dates for 2017/18 – The proposed dates, circulated prior to the meeting were accepted by the meeting.

5.3. Committee Reports – dates for committees and groups to report to the PCC circulated prior to the meeting were accepted with the addition of half yearly report on finance at the July PCC meeting.

6. **Breast Feeding in Church:** Zoe Challenor presented a case to the PCC for making St George's a welcoming place for breast feeding mothers and babies. She said that Britain had the lowest breast-feeding rate in the world and many mothers experience embarrassment or lack of support for feeding their babies in public places. ZC pointed out that many mothers were looking after another child too when out and about and could not simply withdraw to a private place. There are signs now available with a special symbol and the wording 'Breast-feeding welcome here'. The initiative is supported by the National Childbirth Trust and there are A5 packs with basic information about nursing mothers' needs. ZC wanted St George's to display the sign and offer support. Jenny Uff said that the welcome for breast-feeding mothers could be included on the website. There could also be a note on the weekly pew sheet. The PCC indicated being in favour of Zoe's initiative. JF thanked ZC for her presentation and asked if she would follow up her suggestion of producing a short summary of most important issues to be borne in mind regarding breastfeeding for circulation to PCC members. This summary could also be used elsewhere as appropriate.
7. **Lighting Project:** David Hill reminded the PCC that at the March meeting the Lighting Group tabled a report on responses to last year's questionnaire and draft brief. He said the group was leaning towards chiefly using pendant fittings, modern chandeliers because they offered a scheme where lamps are much lower, closer to where the light is needed and more accessible for lamp replacement, maintenance and adjustment. Tim Merrifield passed around a series of boards with pictures of other churches, examples of light fittings and ideas for lighting St George's. In particular he had drawn interior views of the church with pendant fittings in place, hanging either from the roof or from wall brackets. Pendant fittings could work in the nave, aisles and Lady Chapel, but the chancel was more of a challenge. Tim suggested simple unobtrusive task lighting mounted on choir stalls.

The group proposed now to talk with the lighting consultant about these ideas and to test their practicality. More especially they proposed mounting the boards as a display in church for comment and feedback. Justin Pinkess said that particular attention should be paid to the east end of the north aisle and he pointed out that task lighting for the front choir stalls would be difficult as they were scaled for boy choristers. The Vicar said that the display should pose questions to the congregation to generate reaction. It was decided to mount the display in church for the month of June.

8. Roof Repairs / Emergency Stone Work Repairs / Maintenance Plan:

- 8.1. Roof repairs – Carol Couse referred to the paper headed 'A report to the next PCC meeting to be held on 23rd May 2017' and the attached Quantity Surveyor's Report. The report stated that the Standing Committee, by executive decision, has given its approval: "To accept the recommendation of our Quantity Surveyor, dated 16 January 2017, (copy attached) to enter into a contract with Midland Conservation Limited for the Emergency Roof Repairs in the amount of their tender in the sum of £27,240 in accordance with the Terms of the Letter of Invitation to Tender dated 10 November 2016". The report was signed at this meeting by The Vicar, Simon Kirby and John Russell. CC also reported that the contract for the work had been signed by the Vicar, witnessed by CC and handed to Sarah Baldwin, the architect on 4th May 2017. Work is due to start on 5th June.
- 8.2. Emergency stonework repairs – CC said that it had been difficult to gain further funding from charitable bodies for the 'Let the Stones Live' campaign because St George's was unable to meet some 'community involvement' requirements. She and Sarah Baldwin had, never the less,

agreed that it would be sensible to undertake the most needed stonework repairs (from a safety point of view) while the scaffolding was in place for the roof repair work. This work could be funded from money already given to The LTSL, the PCC grant already agreed and an extra £8000 from one donor who originally had specified that the money would be released only when the total LTSL sum had been raised. Sarah Baldwin was in the process of producing a specification for this extra work which would be costed by the contractor and the costs assessed by John Austin as Quantity Surveyor. The specification and costings should be complete in early June. The roof works would take approximately six weeks and the stonework repairs would follow on after that. Derek Mertling-Blake suggested the PCC should now authorise the Standing Committee to accept the contract for this additional work. The Vicar said that the SC would need to know that the architect and the Quantity Surveyor were satisfied that enough funding was available to repair enough stonework to make the structure safe. He proposed from the Chair that the PCC authorise the SC to accept the extra contract. This was agreed. John Austin was to deputise for CC while she was in America.

8.3. Maintenance Plan – CC said she had distributed this for the information of PCC members. Action on the annual maintenance plan was in the remit of the Fabric and Environment Committee, but it is important that PCC members and the congregation in general let CC or committee members know things that are wrong and need attention.

9. **Parish Weekend away:** the Vicar reported that eight people had signed up so far for the weekend on the 8th and 9th July. He said he would book ten places. It would be possible to book further places if the centre still have vacancies.

10. **Prayer Board:** Carol Couse circulated a picture of a prayer board at a church in Florida, where prayers were written on slips of card, the shape and size of luggage labels and then hooked on to the prayer board on one of a pattern of simple hooks. This approach avoids the need for having to press in a pin. The proposal for St George's was for a free standing narrow table with the board fixed onto it. This could be located by the main door. Through a connection of Judy Dykes, the item could be made by Peaky Squirrel, an organisation based in the Digbeth area who make things from recycled materials. There would be no cost to the PCC. The Vicar said that the proposal had been agreed by the Standing Committee and the Education and Worship Committee. The PCC indicated it was happy to move forward with the proposal. The board should be in place by the autumn.

On the subject of prayer, the Vicar spoke of the Novena of Prayer, the initiative of the Archbishops Canterbury and York, inviting all churches to join in a wave of prayer between Ascension Day and Pentecost. He suggested that people pray the Lord's Prayer twice a day. Other events will be shown on the Pew Sheet.

11. Reports

11.1. Treasurer – John Russell distributed his report on the current account of the General Fund up to the end of April 2017. JR reported that the half-yearly review will be presented at the next PCC meeting in July. He added that the work of defining account codes for the Data Development system was proceeding.

11.2. Diocesan Synod – Jenny Uff has circulated a report prior to the meeting. It had been a brief meeting as most of the day had been taken up with Transforming Church. The Archbishops' letter of 16th February had been circulated and discussion of that will be on a future agenda.

12. **Correspondence:** none received

13. Future events: as listed below

14. AOB

14.1. Painting of the Lady Chapel – Carol Couse reported that the painting was planned to be done by now but instead of direct Archdeacon's approval for the work, a faculty had been required. The faculty has now been granted subject to conditions, one of which is that a small sample of the proposed paint be applied to the wall to ensure suitability and match. CC said she would try to obtain a small sample pot of the proposed paint which matched the white used on the south aisle walls.

14.2. Edgborne Confirmation at St George's in 2018 – the Vicar said that the last time a Confirmation Service was held at St George's was in 2014 and was held at 10.30am. The morning was chosen to give the congregations of all the churches involved a chance to experience Confirmation at the main service of the day. The Vicar proposed we follow this precedent for 2018. Justin Pinkess said he was not in favour of this as it required clergy and parishioners to be away from their own churches on that Sunday morning. As the Area Dean wanted a date and time by 17th July, a date before the next PCC meeting, it was proposed that a vote be taken. Twelve were in favour of the morning Confirmation and one against.

15. Date of next meeting: 18th July 2017

16. The Grace: the meeting closed with the saying of the Grace.

Future Events:

- *June 7th – Lunch-time Concert*
- *June 11th – ELCT Songs of Praise - St John and St Peter at 4.00pm*
- *June 18th – Three Congregations Pentecost Service with Lunch'*
- *June 25th – 'Eucharist with Prayer and Laying on of Hands for Healing' – 10.30am*
- *June 25th – Edgborne Confirmations (Old Church)*
- *June 30th – The Revd Simon Thorburne retires*
- *July 8th / 9th – Parish weekend at Elim Conference Centre*
- *July 16th / 23rd / 30th – Summer Series*

Minutes recorded by David Hill

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