

**Parochial Church Council
Minutes of meeting held on 17th November 2015**

1. **Welcome and prayers:** The Vicar opened the meeting by welcoming Peter Millward (Funding 15 Chairperson) & Ms Shirley Atkar (Head Teacher St George's Primary School). All were invited to pray.
2. **Funding 15:** Peter Millward (PM) gave an overview of the Funding 15 Project, its progress and outcome, and an explanation as to why the group is now recommending that the project should draw to a close. PM stressed that although Funding 15 had achieved what it had set out to do, in terms of increasing pledged income and replacing Deeds of Covenant by Direct Debit and Gift Aided pledges, there was work still to be done. Recommended action is set out in PM's Notes (**Attachment 11/15/A**). PM thanked members of Funding 15 for all their hard work, in particular Nick Gibbs and Marion Clarke.
3. **St George's Primary School – Annual Report** – Shirley Atkar (SA) circulated her Head Teachers Report, some of which had been taken from a recent Ofsted Report when the school was graded 'Good' in all categories (**Attachment 11/15/B**). SA reported that although there had been some staff changes, new members had settled well and the school, pupils and staff continue to flourish and despite a sizable transient pupil population the school has a healthy waiting list. Links with secondary schools in the area e.g. King Edwards were continuing and developing in a very positive way. SA commented that the life of the school has been enhanced by the newly constructed Amphitheatre (modelled on the Minack Theatre in Cornwall), as well as the Woodland Walks, the keeping of chickens and the Friendship Bench. Concern for the future, regarding changes in government funding, associated with Pupil Premiums, given that 60% of pupils receive free school meals, was ongoing.
4. **Attendance:** The Revd Julian Francis (Chair), Ian French, Anne Game, Simon Kirby Justin Pinkess, John Russell, Caroline Shaw, Charles Williams, Pat World, Phil Ypres-Smith.
Apologies: Doreen Beevers, Revd. Colin Butler, Kirsty Butler, Carol Couse, Philip Couse, Maggi Cull, John Hatch **Visitors:** Peter Millward, Shirley Atkar.
5. **Minutes of the PCC meeting on 22nd September 2015:** were approved and duly signed.
6. **Matters arising:**
 - 6.1. **Outstanding vacancy for Church Warden** – the Vicar reported that the quest for a second Church Warden remained on-going. JF reminded the PCC that the current CW, John Hatch was unlikely to continue in office beyond 2016/17. The PCC thanked Marion Clarke for her ongoing support of JH
 - 6.2. **Junior Church Co-ordinator** – the Vicar reported that the Suganthi Daniel had agreed to be JC Co-ordinator and that the following members of JC now have the following responsibility: Lorraine Graham – JC Secretary; Kirsty Butler – JC Representative on the PCC and Heather Butler – JC Rota Co-ordinator.
 - 6.3. **Parking** – John Russell reported that car parking spaces were now fully booked.
 - 6.4. **Deanery Pilgrimage** – JF reported that this is being postponed until further notice.

7. **Let the Stones Live:** JF informed the PCC officially that the HLF Application had been turned down. During discussion the PCC expressed their regret as to the outcome but thanked Carol Couse and Jane Darnton for their hard work and dedication to the task. As a result of comments made by the HLF CC had put together a proposal (**Attachment 11/15/C**) regarding the need to designate funds for the essential and urgent stone work. As well as identifying the necessary funds, setting money's aside would in effect reduce the 'Reserve Fund' which was generally felt to be a factor in the outcome of the HLF application, i.e. it being too healthy. Given, that any designated fund can be undesignated by the PCC, unlike a Restricted Fund, the following was proposed and agreed.

'The PCC agrees to designate £25,000 for the purpose of stonework repairs.'
Proposed by: Ian French *Seconded by: Charles William*

Following the vote, as an associated matter, the Vicar informed the PCC that Philip Couse, had raised the matter of St George's Reserve Policy in general. As a result of PC's comments, the Finance Committee are to meet in January to review the Reserves Policy and will report back to the PCC in due course. Simon Kirby is to attend the Finance Committee meeting.

8. **Response to the Refugee Crisis:** The Vicar circulated a paper, entitled 'What can Christians Do?' (**Attachment 11/15/D**) for discussion, alongside the previously circulated papers, Bishop David's Statement (**Attachment 11/15/E**) and the Lawyers Charter (**Attachment 11/15/F**). Discussion of the topic included the following:
- Although the situation may seem overwhelming, local small initiatives might be the best way to help those who might receive and those who might give help.
 - Local charities such as BIRCH, RESTORE, REFUGEE COUNCIL are all active and in need of support both financial and volunteers.
 - Could St George's offer a place of welcome? Would KARIS be in a better place to offer this, with support? JF agreed to investigate.
 - Concert on 5th December Bach Choir, St Peter's Harborne 'Singing for Syria'
 - JF has a meeting planned with St George's Ethiopian Partners when this matter will be discussed.

It was agreed that as some research was still needed regarding what responses were happening locally, the PCC would be better placed to decide how best to respond to the refugee crisis at its January meeting.

9. **Malawi Link** – the Vicar reported on the Mission Partnership Committee's discussion on this matter stating that although one or two individuals were keen to pursue the link, it was felt that contact and support for Malawi might be best achieved by St George's renewing its link via the Diocesan Scheme, rather than at an individual parish level. It was agreed that JF convey this decision to Richard Tucker as soon as possible.

As an associated matter JF informed the PCC that he had been approached to become a Commissary, representing the [Matabeleland](#) Diocesan Bishop, Rt Revd Cleophas Lunga, in the UK.

10. Reports

- 10.1. **Safeguarding Group** – The Group's Report, previously circulated, (**Attachment 11/15/G**) and presented by Pat World (PW) identifies the work PW has been doing with regard to ensuring all the relevant policy documents are up to date and that they are documented and implemented in such a manner that make them accessible to all

interested parties. There is now a manual in the Church Office as well as a box file with all relevant material. After discussion the following was proposed and accepted:

'The PCC adopt the Church of England's Policies and Practices on Child Protection, Safeguarding of Adults and Response to Survivor of Sexual Abuse, Risk Assessment and Safe Recruiting as set out in their policy documents.'

Proposed by: Justin Pinkess

Seconded by: John Russell

- 10.2. **Mission Partnership Committee** – The Vicar reported that the Committee had met and as well as discussing the Malawi Link, had put together a suggested list for the annual 'Mission Tithe Allocation (**Attachment 11/15/H**). It was proposed and agreed that:

'The PCC accepts the MPC suggested allocation.'

Proposed by Pat World

Seconded by: Justin Pinkess

- 10.3. **Deanery Synod** – the Vicar reported that there had been a discussion on the Pilling Report. Four points of view lasting 20 minutes had been put with no responses invited. A second Synod is to be held where responses will be shared. Caroline Shaw reported that a discussion on the Parish share of the Common Fund needed to take place in order for it to be raised at Deanery Synod.

- 10.4. **Treasurer** – John Russell (JR) circulated the latest spreadsheet (**Attachment 11/15/I**) giving a snap shot of the General Fund against the budget. *It was requested that the John James (JJ) Legacy, when received, might be used to fund two more benches.* JJ was a keen gardener and the two existing benches were being well used. JJ was also involved as a sacristan, and it was suggested that some of his legacy be used in this area. It was agreed to reflect on matters and decide at the January PCC meeting.

11. Correspondence: None received

12. Past Events:

- 12.1. LTSL Auction – it was agreed that this was a successful event and well worth doing and that a letter of thanks be sent to Biddle and Webb.
- 12.2. Lunchtime Concerts – these continue to go well and are appreciated.

13. Future events: the following events were noted:

- November 29th Advent Sunday,
- December 1st Light up The World – 6pm
- December 2nd Lunchtime Concert
- December 10th Office Carols – 1.15pm
- December 13th Nativity with St G's School
- December 20th Christmas, Carols for All – 5.30pm
- January 3rd Epiphany
- January 6th Lunchtime Concert
- January 31st, Christingle
- February 10th Ash Wednesday
- February 14th Valentine Sunday

14. Any Other Business:

- 14.1. **Peace Garden Plaque** – Carol Couse has requested that a plaque for the Peace Garden be authorised and paid for. A quote of £235.00 + vat has been received. All agreed this should go ahead.
- 14.2. **Jenny Uff – Completion of Reader training.** The Vicar reported that JU is to be licensed at the Cathedral on 23rd January and asked the PCC if they would like to mark this in some way, either with a Reader's Scarf or by some other gift. All were in agreement but it was suggested JU be asked as to what she would like to the value of £100-£150.00.

15. Date of next meeting Tuesday 19th January 2016 at 7.00pm

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

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