
RUSHMERE ST ANDREW PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held in the church hall and via Zoom at 7.30 pm on Thursday 20th January 2022

Present: Revd Sue Foster, Gill Ainslie, Bob Batchelor, Kevin Brazier, Rachel Daniels, Paul Hesketh, Bob Mellor, Tim Oxbrow, Hilary Platts, Teresa Rose, Russell Scates, Sue Scotchmere, Ruth Silburn, Revd Marion Walker, Chris Yule.

Attending via Zoom: Gill Crisp, Chris Gibson, Mary Odam.

Apologies: Widge Bowman, Robin Brown, David Gill.

Revd Sue opened the meeting with prayer.

22.01 The Minutes of the PCC meeting held 18th November 2021 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

Matters Arising:

21.69: Ruth Silburn hoped to start a Sustainability Course on March 1st

Minutes of the Standing Committees held 9th and 13th December 2021 by email re. 1861 north nave and aisle refurbishment: the matters discussed will come up later on the agenda under 22.07 Wardens' Report.

22.02 Correspondence

- Letter of thanks and donation of £200 from Northgate High School for use of premises for Young Musician of the Year concert.
- Letter of thanks from FIND for Christmas gifts and support throughout the year.

22.03 Treasurer's Report

a) Matters arising

- Issues concerning use etc. of Contactless Giving terminal still outstanding.
- Application for subsidized Energy Audit accepted and should happen in Spring.

b) Income November-December 2021

- Appeals responses: about £500.
- Donations: £2k for Roof Appeal; £820 from Bike Ride; £500 from Revd. Gray; £400 from Lunch Club; about £300 each from Gift Day and Beacon of Love so far; £250 from Northgate & Suzuki Concerts; £155 from Contactless and £35 from on-line.
- Other: £1.8k from Hall Hire.

c) Payments schedule November-December 2021

- Nothing exceptional; Vicar's expenses include £400 for on-line services, £400 for mileage, £250 for printer ink; Treasurer's expenses also include £100 for ink.

d) Income & Expenditure to 31/12/21

- Deficit of £7.5k is better than forecast due to greater than expected income for Donations (& consequently Gift Aid Tax Refund) and lower Maintenance costs.
- Income: down £1k from 2020, but £19.2k lower than 2019.
- Expenditure: down £2.5k from 2020, and £11.6k from 2019.
- Deficit: £1.5k lower than 2020, and £7.5k from 2019.

e) Funds schedule @ 31/12/21

- Schedule shows addition of designated Tyler Memorial Fund, and restricted Sunday School RTU Fund (as agreed at November's PCC meeting).
- the 2021 Deficit of £7,493 has been funded from the Unrestricted Reserve, but this reduces the balance to below PCC's policy of 4 month's expenditure; to correct this, PCC again need to transfer some Designated Funds to the Unrestricted Reserve; Treasurer suggests un-designating the Brown, Smith, Dee and Frost Funds and transferring these Funds to Unrestricted so that it has a balance of £35,067; this is then greater than the £30,000 required, so £5,067 is returned to the Dee Fund, and this Fund is again Designated Fabric.

Proposed by Chris Gibson, seconded by Gill Crisp: *The PCC is asked to approve the motion to "Un-designate Brown, Smith, Dee and Frost Fabric Funds, transferring sufficient funds to the Unrestricted Reserve so its Balance at 31st December 2021 is £30,000; and the unused balance of these transferred funds is returned to the Dee Fund, which is re-designated as a Fabric Fund."*

The motion was **approved by the PCC** by a show of hands.

f) Balance sheet @ 31/12/21

- this reflects the first changes mentioned in e) but will alter in detail slightly if the PCC pass the above Motion; the overall total of £148,137 won't change until we receive an up-to-date valuation for the Nellie Middleditch endowment/CB fixed interest securities later this month.

g) 2022 Budget

- This first draft attempts to reflect as normal a year as is possible at the moment;
- Income is budgeted to be £80k, up nearly £6k on 2021, and Expenditure to be £87k, up just over £5k;
- A deficit of £7k is budgeted, only slightly less than 2021.

Thanks were recorded to Chris for all he does to manage our finances so well

22.04 Looking to the future

Revd Sue introduced the topic: after 2 challenging years we need to look ahead to how we rebuild our fellowship, what we want church to look like in the future, encouraging people to take on volunteer roles, attracting people back to church and how we address finances.

Discussion focused on heating the church to make it more welcoming as the cold is deterring people from coming; children really suffered at the Advent event (has possibly affected bookings for Christingle); possible damage to fabric of church and organ; use of hall for services; how are we going to adapt when regulations change shortly; CO2 monitors. The Wardens and Revd Sue are due to meet next week to discuss this, but it was agreed the heating will be put on before the 8am service and 9 -10am over the next few weeks on a trial basis.

The question of what our worship will look like after Alan leaves was also raised. The organ will be out of use for 6-8 weeks and some services may need to be held in the hall when the roof work starts. There are musicians in the church and stand-in organists are available. There is no need to rush an appointment, and the matter will be discussed fully at a later date.

22.05 Queen's Platinum Jubilee

This was held over to a later meeting.

22.06 Updates

Health & Safety and Fire Safety: Minutes of the annual meeting held to fulfill statutory requirements had been circulated. Some matters for action identified and will be addressed. There are quantities of cleaning products which have been purchased that need to be checked to ensure COSHH datasheets are on file.

Safeguarding: the annual report had been circulated. Face-to-face training will soon be offered again and sessions will be organized.

22.07 Churchwardens' Report

The wardens have been meeting regularly to review the work of the church.

Health & Safety/Safeguarding: All risk assessments are updated monthly, the annual meetings have taken place and everything is up-to-date.

Still waiting for the Council to repair the churchyard wall and for the glazier to repair the broken east window.

The contactless giving machine is in use with varying degrees of success; thanks to Hilary for her diligence.

The Open Door continues every weekday between 10 and 12 and is thought to be very worthwhile. All those involved are very happy to continue. Anyone wishing to join the happy band of helpers would be most welcome.

Our Christmas services and events went well; thanks to Rev Sue for the number of services offered to give everyone an opportunity to share in Christmas worship. A huge thank you to all those involved in preparing and setting up the amazing Angel Trail. Too many people involved to mention but the church looked really wonderful and was appreciated and enjoyed by so many people. Well done Rushmere!!

As always enormous thanks to our gardeners and working party who continue to keep churchyard and car parks looking smart and cared for. And thanks to you all, too many to mention by name, who do unseen but essential jobs to keep our church running smoothly.

There was discussion about the Contactless giving machine and how important it is to have it out daily. Tim offered to look into the matter with Bob M. and Kevin.

North Nave and aisle Roof

A paper had been circulated showing grants/donations received (£55,973) and project costs (£50,883). Estimated project time 6 weeks, although architect has allocated 12 weeks. Internal and external scaffolding should be up by end of January and work hoped to start soon after. The organ, pipes and pew ends will be covered. It is hoped South door may be used for funerals, but services may need to be in new end of church. Hopefully the Open Door will carry on in old end or in the new end. The excess of funding over costs almost matches the donations made by church members, so could easily be transferred to other roof projects. Plans are in place to ensure deliveries of materials and parking are not an issue, but the Art Group will be notified. Old end of church may not need to be cleaned while work in progress. Final schedule of timing of work not yet available.

Proposed by Hilary Platts and seconded by Bob Batchelor: *that the PCC agree to proceed to contract with Maguire Roofing for the refurbishment of the north nave and aisle roof.*

The motion was **approved by the PCC** by a show of hands.

Thanks were recorded to the Wardens for obtaining funding for this project.

22.08 Panel reports: None received

22.09 Church events

- There will be no online service this week
- The coffee morning was successful and raised £94
- Advent event went well
- Christingle on January 29th may take place in the hall as there are not many families booked in as yet

22.10 Any other business

- A collection, card and cake are in hand for Alan; his last Sunday is January 23rd.
- PCC Minutes on the new church website: not possible to put them on a password protected page as previously. The PCC was asked to approve putting them on the website without password protection, with the proviso that any particularly sensitive matters could be redacted. Advice from the Diocesan Office suggested this was not a problem. The **PCC agreed** by a show of hands.
- Online services: these are very professional and were greatly appreciated during lockdown, but as more people have returned to church, the effort and time required to produce them was queried. Revd Sue agreed they do take a long time (about 20 hours), but pointed out that the Bishops are keen that online services continue and the weekly views are sometimes more than the number of people attending services in person. Online streaming would involve sound and camera equipment and people to operate it, licences and reliable wi-fi. In spite of the time involved, she did not feel the suggestions made - recording and uploading the 10am Sunday service, re-using parts of recordings or producing them less frequently - were adequate alternatives.

The meeting closed with prayers at 9.30pm

The date of the next PCC Meeting is Thursday 3rd March 2022.