

RUSHMERE ST ANDREW PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on 26th January 2023

Present: Bob Batchelor, Kevin Brazier, Robin Brown, David Chaplin, Gill Crisp, Rachel Daniels, Chris Gibson, David Gill (on Zoom), Paul Hesketh, Margaret Mellor, Mary Odam, Tim Oxbrow, Hilary Platts, Teresa Rose, Russell Scates, Sue Scotchmere, Ruth Silburn, Revd Marion Walker, Chris Yule.

Apologies: Gill Ainslie, Jim Ainslie.

Revd Marion opened the meeting with prayer.

23.01 Minutes of the PCC meeting held on 17th November 2022: The Crib Service on 24th December was added under 26.67 and the minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

Matters Arising:

22.63 Patrick no longer wishes to be the organ scholar. To be discussed at the next PCC.

22.68 Some PCC dates have been changed to 26th January, 11th May and 23rd November.

23.02 Correspondence

- Letter of thanks for use of the car park by the Arts Society South East Suffolk and donation of £90.
- From Diocese - Deanery Synod elections to take place this year. Speak to current members (Robin Brown, Paul Hesketh and Hilary Platts) to find out more.

23.03 Treasurer's report

a) Matters arising: the energy audit has been received (agenda item 23.05 below); hall hirers have accepted revised fees.

b) Income November-December 2022

Income from various donations and events were highlighted.

c) Payments schedule November-December 2022

A lot of year-end expenditure: PAT testing is now biennial: the Youth Worker's salary increase effective from 1/12/22; electricity usage rose by 35% in Nov/Dec compared to 2021. TO/CG monitoring this, as Scottish Power is seeking to raise monthly payment.

d) Income & Expenditure to 31/12/22

- Income: up £8k from 2021, but total of 4 main giving categories down £13k on 2019; donations include £6.5k from various estates; hall hire is nearly doubled from 2021.
- Expenditure: up £3.5k from 2021 but under control
- Deficit: down by £4.5k to £2.8k.

e) Funds schedule

Reserves remain healthy, but only one third (the Designated Funds) are readily available. The Treasurer proposes to meet the 2022 deficit by undesignating and transferring funds.

It was proposed by Russell Scates, seconded by Ruth Silburn and **the PCC agreed** to 'Undesignate the Dee Fabric Fund, transferring these funds to the Unrestricted Reserve so its Balance at 31st December 2022 is at least one third of budgeted Expenditure for 2023; and any excess is returned to the Dee Fund, which is re-designated as a Fabric Fund'.

f) Balance Sheet - Treasurer explained the figures; final version when we have received the Middleditch Endowment valuation @ 31/12/22.

g) Treasurer explained the graphs of Income & Expenditure, Surplus/Deficit, Restricted & Free Reserves, as shown covering the past 8 years.

It was noted the Diocese has arranged a Deanery conference to discuss finance.

23.04 Budget for 2023

The Treasurer explained the background to the budget - based on the assumptions there will be increased activity following the arrival of Revd Alan, that the congregation grows slowly, and that a Director of Music is employed for 4 months in the second half of 2023.

Income is budgeted to be £81K, down slightly on 2022 due to much lower Donations but higher Fees and Heating, Hall hire, *Outlook* adverts, and Investment income.

Expenditure budgeted to be £94K, up substantially from 2022 due to nearly £4.5K rise in Parish Share (6.5%), increased energy costs, Insurance up 10%, and new Director of Music.

Deficit is thus budgeted to be £13K, vastly up on 2022, and our greatest in last 50 years.

Approval of the Budget was left until after other agenda items which may affect it had been discussed. See p.3 below, after 23.09

There followed a discussion of approval of expenditure in the future. **The PCC agreed** that:

- wherever possible expenditure should come from Restricted Funds
- obtaining 3 quotes was generally advisable, but that sometimes using 'tried and trusted' suppliers or contactors who know the church premises/systems was acceptable

and it was reiterated that sums of up expenditure up to £50 did not need PCC approval, above £100 could be decided by the Standing Committee, and if the Treasurer disagrees the matter comes to the full PCC.

23.05 Environmental Considerations

Thanks to Ruth Silburn for leading the group which has obtained a Silver Eco award for the church. People were encouraged to visit the A Rocha website <https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/> and register to see our audit and find out what we can do individually.

The energy report from ESOS-Energy provides a 3-phase plan to meet the Diocesan Net Zero Carbon target by 2030, involving structural changes to buildings and equipment, worship and teaching, community and global engagement and lifestyle. This will impact our ability to apply for grants for green initiatives in the future. Tim will follow up why the report does not recommend secondary/double glazing. Thanks were noted to the Bishop for the 2 trees we have received and other tree-planting is being considered. It was noted that Fairtrade products are generally more expensive.

It was proposed by Ruth Silburn, seconded by David Chaplin and **the PCC agreed** to adopt Phase 1 of the proposal: to upgrade lighting, improve the environmental credentials of the church, use environmentally friendly cleaning products, and to work with the Parish and District Council tree-planting scheme.

It was suggested Jean Yule be asked to notify Hall users of our environmental aims.

23.06 Giving and fundraising

Tim and Revd Alan have discussed fundraising, and propose:

- repeating the Generous Giving initiative: the Wardens, Ministry Team and Treasurer will produce a booklet, and pieces for *Focus* and for the wider community on giving of money, talents, prayer, time and commitment.
- a fund-raising event in the summer: e.g. art show, craft displays, sale of products, barbeque, fun activities for families etc. Local groups will be invited to get involved. Paul Hesketh offered to co-ordinate an organizing team.

The Treasurer reminded us to think of fund-raising for the church more often, as well as for charities.

23.07 Church and Hall Wi-fi proposal

A quote from AED and a landline/broadband package from BT were considered. The AED work (parts, installation, cabling and programming) could be met from capital expenditure. It was thought a better landline/broadband package might be found.

It was proposed by Russell Scates, seconded by Bob Batchelor and **the PCC agreed** that Wi-fi be installed in the church, hall and parish room and a package costing up to £30 per month for phone and broadband be found (3 quotes will be sought).

23.08 Coronation events

27th April – Parish Council using church, hall and grounds for an event for the whole parish. Trees are to be planted along the verge by the car-park.

Church celebrations will be a special service on Sunday 7th followed by a bring-and-share lunch, and a youth event on Monday 8th. It was suggested we could set up a TV in the Hall for people to watch the T.V. coverage together.

23.09 Annual report of Fire, Health & Safety and Safeguarding

Documents had been circulated before the meeting.

It was pointed out there is no risk assessment for bell-ringers, although they are mentioned in the main document. Mary Odam was invited to suggest any particular points to be added, or to submit a separate risk assessment.

Safeguarding: Face-to-face training is unlikely in the near future because there are so few trainers. It was proposed by Gill Crisp, seconded by Teresa Rose and the report was **approved and adopted by the PCC**.

23.04 Budget for 2023

Following the above discussions of items 23.05-23.08 and their financial implications, the Treasurer modified the Budget to reduce the Deficit by £1k and the adoption of the 2023 Budget was voted on. It was proposed by Bob Batchelor, seconded by Kevin Brazier and **the PCC agreed** it should be adopted.

23.10 Churchwardens' report

Thanks to everyone who contributed in any way to the celebrations of Advent, Christmas and Epiphany, and to the ongoing activities of the church. The Churchwardens have been very busy, overseeing the north nave and aisle roof project, insurance, fire safety, the annual Fire, H&S and Safeguarding meeting, checking the inventory, completing Statistics for Mission and the Energy Footprint Tool.

A link to the Rushmere St Andrew Neighbourhood Plan 2013-2036 had been circulated.
<https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Planning/Neighbourhood-Planning/Designated-Neighbourhood-Areas/Rushmere/RUSHMERE-NP-Referendum-Version-09-12-22.pdf>
n.b. the plan has not yet been adopted – will happen in May.

Three key points:

- The proposed large housing development on the east side of Humber Doucy Lane between Tuddenham Road and Seven Cottages Lane may add about 500 dwellings to our parish for us to prepare to serve.
- It is planned a planting of 2,500 trees starting in the spring, including the verge fronting the meadow carpark.
- The vicarage meadow, part of which we rent for our meadow car park, remains designated as green open space – a ‘settlement gap’.

Thanks for everyone’s support as we prepare for the arrival of Revd Alan Comfort.

23.11 Panel reports

Pastoral Panel – thanks to Claire and Dianne for the work they have done on the parish directory

Social panel – the amount of money raised was noted, including over £1,500 for church funds

Education Panel – Two Lent courses being offered, one on Zoom and one in person. Details in Focus and on the website.

23.12 Church events

- 28th Jan. Prayer breakfast and Quiz
- 29th Jan. Candlemas and Growing Younger Sunday
- 4th Feb. Christingle family event
- 8th Feb. Games afternoon restarts
- 11th Feb. Rum Old Boys – sea shanties and fish and chip supper
- 19th Feb. Wedding Songs of Praise and t@4
- 20th Feb. Lent courses begin
- 22nd Feb. Ash Wednesday
- 3rd Mar. World Day of Prayer
- 5th March Sunday afternoon concerts begin
- 14th April Gather weekend for young people at Sizewell (some funding will be available)

23.13 Any other business

- 13th May: Revd Alan to lead our away day
- a generous offer to pay for 1 large and 2 small Gopak tables was accepted
- Tim to investigate obtaining a defibrillator for church
- a letter is being sent to the Parish Council about a possible £500 grant for lighting
- *Focus*: please let Gill or Claire have any thoughts on changes to it

The meeting closed with The Grace at 9.30pm

The next PCC Meeting is Thursday 2nd March and the APCM is on 23rd March 2023.