

## RUSHMERE ST ANDREW PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2023

**Present:** Revd Alan Comfort, Gill Ainslie, Bob Batchelor, Kevin Brazier, David Chaplin, Rachel Daniels, Chris Gibson, David Gill, Margaret Mellor, Mary Odam, Tim Oxbrow, Hilary Platts, Teresa Rose, Ruth Silburn, Revd Marion Walker, Chris Yule.

**Apologies:** Robin Brown, Claire Driver.

Revd Alan opened the meeting with prayer.

**23.55 The Minutes of the PCC** meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> September were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record. There were no Matters Arising.

#### 23.56 Correspondence

- Email from John Robbins on behalf of St John Ambulance thanking the PCC for the donation of £150 which was made following the training session on 18<sup>th</sup> October.

#### 23.57 Vicar's items

- Worship: there was discussion about what has encouraged us in church recently – points mentioned included seeing new faces in church, a sense of joy and purpose, people getting involved, the new Monday prayer group, thriving house groups, Messy Church, a spiritual 'warming up' and having an experienced vicar. Revd Alan highlighted the importance of adjusting and being prepared to receive new people; change is necessary but must be done sensitively – what, how and when to change. The style of worship is changing gently at present, but how will people attending Messy Church relate to our current worship, and will they come to the church? Is Sunday afternoon a better time for families? A second monthly Messy Church activity may be started after Easter.
- Director of Music: until we know how things are going to develop it is difficult to make an appointment, but an organist to play twice a month is being sought.
- May Festival: plans are taking shape to draw people in and build relationships within the community - includes concerts, a men's breakfast, a dinner with a speaker, and the regular groups will do something special. Proposed concert on 25<sup>th</sup> May by London Community Gospel Choir; will cost £3,100, but this will be recouped through ticket sales. **The PCC agreed** this expenditure and for the contract to be moved forward.

#### 23.58 Treasurer's report

a) Matters arising: photocopier contract in hand – still operating under old contract; gas contract moving to Scottish Power for 3 years; 129 "Thank you" letters distributed to 169 people for National Generosity Week; £200 from baptism gift designated to Youth Fund.

b) Income: £760 from Ride & Stride – thanks to Bob M, Kevin and Rachel and David Yaroslaw; various donations, miscellaneous income and interest payments noted.

c) Payments schedule: a lighter 2 months; new kitchen water heater being rented; Messy Church expenses will be partly covered by £2,000 grant from Elizabeth Walter Trust.

d) Income & Expenditure: income up 11% on 2022 and expenditure up 8%, surplus up slightly over last 2 months (*n.b.* Youth Worker costs still not being met from Income). All income categories up except Donations, but 2022 was an exceptional year. Miscellaneous costs include Defibrillator – thanks to Ruth for organizing this.

e) Funds schedule @ 31/10/23: overall funds down nearly £10k, mainly due to Vicarage refurb, Youth Worker, Roof drainage work and wi-fi installation.

Query over recent quiz surplus being given to Organ Fund; it was explained the October quiz was traditionally in aid of the organ. **It was agreed** that the Social Panel would be asked that half of any surplus would go to a charity of the quiz-setter's choice and half to the church, with the PCC to decide which Fund benefits.

f) 2023 forecast: this year looks likely to break even, possibly better.

g) 2024 initial budget: estimated income down due to no weddings at present and no specific fundraising day planned; expenditure higher due to Parish Share and Mission costs. Deficit estimated at £4k. Treasurer will be consulting as usual.

h) Other matters: The question of people purchasing and giving items to the church without being reimbursed was raised by the Treasurer. Although very kind, it means these expenses are unknown to PCC who are thus misled as to the true financial position of the Church for which they are responsible as Trustees, and the wider Church is also misled. Although this was recognized as an issue, several people were unhappy that they could not contribute to costs in this way, and a proposal that “all items purchased for Church use by an individual should be reclaimed from the PCC treasurer, unless there is an exceptional reason such as very low cost (*e.g.* for a cake) in which case the PCC treasurer should be informed” **was not approved**.

The 3-year Long Term Undertaking with Ecclesiastical Insurance ends on 31st December, so we are able to look at alternative insurers. Ecclesiastical is proposing another 3-year LTU at £3,042 p.a. for the first year, up by 6% from £2,861. The Treasurer was asked to investigate other options but to accept this quote if nothing better found.

### **23.59 Parochial Fees and salaries for 2024**

A table of proposed fees had been circulated, showing PCC and Fixed fees. **They were all approved**, and **it was also agreed** to leave the relief organist rate at the current sum of £50

### **23.60 Appointment of an Independent Examiner**

The PCC **approved** the appointment of Sandy Lloyd FCA as Independent Examiner.

### **23.61 Declaration of Members' Benefits**

The Treasurer reminded PCC members of the statement in the Annual Report and Accounts and asked them to inform him if they have anything to declare.

### **23.62 Organ Matters**

Friends scheme: **the PCC agreed** to leave the annual subscriptions unchanged (£25 for individual or £35 for joint membership). It was decided not to update the leaflet at this time.

Organ tuning: the possibility of using a different organ tuner was discussed, but it was decided to stay with the current tuner and perhaps review later.

### 23.62 Updates

- Health & Safety: The defibrillator has been purchased and is in the vestry ready to be used. The DAC has been contacted about its placement and a list A application is needed for its installation.  
Andrew Duncan is standing down as Health & Safety Officer, and the PCC wishes to thank him for his many years of service. Tim Oxbrow is prepared to take on the role. The annual H&S meeting takes place in January.
- Safeguarding: November 20<sup>th</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup> is Safeguarding Adults Week, and thanks to Jean Yule for including it in intercessions. There are no safeguarding issues at present. A change in legislation means that convictions are now spent much more quickly than previously. Several people need to renew their Safeguarding training and DBS in January, and Bob will remind them again.
- Eco church: There was a display in church in October, and the information will be put on our website. David Yaroslaw has joined the Monday working group and has agreed to help with Eco church matters. Lights in church have been upgraded to LED and the hall will be done next.

### 23.64 Wardens' Report

A temporary repair costing about £90 has been carried out on the vestry and store roof and this seems to have been successful – thanks to Tim, Bob M, Kevin and Chris G. Still waiting to hear from Nick Jacob about a permanent solution.  
Noticeboard for north entrance to churchyard – in hand.

### 23.65 Panel Reports

- Parochial Giving: **the PCC approved** the proposed charities of the month for 2024. About £15,000 has been raised in 2023 through collections and events, including £4.5k for St Andrew's.
- Growth and Education Panels: the PCC was reminded that the work of these groups has been taken over by the Ministry Team.
- Social Panel: it was pointed out that £223 was from a coffee morning, not a quiz.

### 23.66 Church events

RTU Sale - thanks to everyone involved in planning, setting up and helping on the day. Lots of money was raised and it was a joyful occasion which brought many people into the church.

#### December

3<sup>rd</sup> Advent evensong, 6.30pm  
10<sup>th</sup> Messy Church at St Andrew's, 3-5pm  
17<sup>th</sup> Carol Service, 6.30pm  
24<sup>th</sup> Crib Service, 4pm  
Midnight service, 11.30pm  
25<sup>th</sup> Family Communion, 10am

### 23.67 Any Other Business

- Notes from those attending the Ipswich Deanery Conference had been circulated

- Focus: please send items for the next issue to Gill Crisp – this will be for the whole of December. Gill will be stepping down at the end of the year, and Focus will become a monthly news sheet if no-one else offers to help Claire.

Proposed PCC dates for 2024

25<sup>th</sup> January

21<sup>st</sup> March

25<sup>th</sup> April *APCM*

16th May (not 23<sup>rd</sup> as mentioned at the meeting)

25<sup>th</sup> July

26<sup>th</sup> September

28<sup>th</sup> November

The meeting closed with prayers and The Grace at 9.35pm.

**The date of the next PCC Meeting is Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2024**