

MINUTES : Meeting of the Parochial Church Council of the Parish of Wymondham

Wednesday 15th December 2020 at 5pm

In the Lady Chapel

Attendees:

In person

The Revd Catherine Relf-Pennington SSM (MthrC)

Philip Aldred (PA), Vivien Coates (VC), Kay Dorling (KD), Ruth Jackson (RJ), Sybil Martin (SM,) Andrew Naylor (AN.)

By zoom link

Mrs Barbara Randall (BR,) Mrs C Lowe (CL), Mrs Donna Taylor (DT), Dr S Lyall (SL).

In attendance:

- *In person* Timothy Jackson (TJ)
- *By zoom* Craig Davies (treasurer)

The meeting opened with Prayer

1. **Apologies for absence** Apologies accepted; Catherine Mack (CM,) Sue Ward (SW,) Matthew Jordan (MJ,) Bernard Douglass (BD,) Tina Kelly (TK.)
2. **Declarations of interest** There were no declarations of interest.
3. A Proposal re coopting a new member.
Proposal to Co-opt Mrs Donna Taylor to the PCC

This proposal was warmly welcomed
Carried unanimously

4. Correspondence not covered by agenda

A). Letter signed from the Choir - note we have been advised that many members had not seen or agreed to the letter but their names appeared as if signatories.

Q. Questioned the redundancy of **Mr R Goodrich**

A. The advice of HR consultant was carefully followed throughout the process.

Q. future of "The Wymondham Abbey Choir."

A. not technically in the remit of the PCC: The Vicar took the opportunity to thank all the Abbey musicians- the choir, the band, the pianists, the children's choir and other singers.

Vicar proposed the continued use , support and development of the Abbey musicians plus and additional 2 choirs.

- Wymondham Abbey Choir – as currently constituted singing once or twice a month (whatever is practicable after lock down)
- Introduce an Auditioned choir – perhaps singing once a month
- Children choir singing once a month or every 6 weeks
- Band playing 5 times a year.
- Introducing Community choir meeting weekly and singing in the Abbey once a term

· Actively seeking grants for Music festival two weekends in Summer involving schools.

Q. Why is the name Wymondham Abbey Choir not to be used on UTube?

A. Because the videos were not produced through the auspices of Wymondham Abbey The Abbey name obviously cannot be used by individuals to unilaterally post material as if official.

Q. Why has the Abbey not used the choir recordings?

A. Sadly the offering was not considered to be of a good enough quality. There is a vast amount of professional produced material freely available with engaging graphics.

Our experience shows that traditional choral videos do not attract an audience on our platforms.

Q Music at services?

A. When 1. allowed and 2. as individual choristers return then music will be introduced. A member of the choir who has attended services In tier 2 we are allowed a singer, but we are not going to pressure anyone to come to sing.

Q. Did the PCC approve the redundancy?

A. Yes; the PCC resolved that HR advice be followed. This was done.

Q. Any way to appeal the redundancy?

A. No.

Q Why is the PCC negligent in its duty of care to the choir?

A. The PCC is not negligent in its care. Significant efforts to uphold the entire community during CV19. The choir is upheld in the same way as all members of the church. Phone calls, letters, cards, website, fb, YouTube. Noted that no groups have had special treatment.

Proposal.

That the PCC informs the choir when restrictions ease - that choral music and other forms of music for worship will be encouraged under a wider umbrella

NB We experience longstanding and continuing issues getting emails for the choir.

agreed unanimously

B). From the Abbey Hall committee.

Q. What plans there are for the Hall to reopen

A. The committee have been asked to prepare risk assessments for the various hiring situations. They have failed to do this.

The committee wrongly have mischievously asserted that the parish office has been relocated to the Hall. **The facts have been made clear to them.**

[LINK](#) it is important that you look at this

The zoom link for the Abbey Hall meeting

Fill in your contact details to register to view it
And then a password which is
b%@=58Th

<https://us02web.zoom.us/re/share/ct1TZDmD86sqNPeli4uzlqPmiJEdPEHmmXIHUdPvt5gu-sUE8PpDUYOWL0o.m-KWUJiSIS1Pycdw?startTime=1601302122000>

At Feb Meeting the PCC were enthused by the idea of converting it to a set of studios for craftspeople, wellbeing work and support for a broader section of the community. Currently the hall cannot be let because it cannot be brought to the Covid safe standard. Furthermore, the current regular hires could not be accommodated safely.

AN apologised for the confusion caused by sign saying Abbey Office post to go to (new) box on Hall wall, this was put up to save redirection costs.

Currently the photocopier and stationery is in the Hall, and will be removed before the Hall reopening. The copier is on a lease that expires in December.

The AH committee have failed to draw up RAs asked of them and have not addressed safeguarding arrangements for hirers. If the AH cannot provide RAs for all hirers then the hirers should provide them. Proposals for hire and RAs to be submitted to the PCC for approval.

Discussions lead the PCC to the need for management of the AH. It shares the Abbey Charity number yet has its own constitution which has not been reviewed for some years. This is probably non-compliant with Charity Law and needs to be addressed.

The PCC notes that yet again the AH have written in an extremely aggressive tone and that the AH committee has misrepresented the Abbey, PCC, Vicar and Wardens in its dealings with the hirers. The AH committee is hostile to the PCC.

Concerns raised over the arrangements over the "Parish" Lunch. The lunch costs £10 per head and there is a suggestion that the money raised goes to the Children's Society, however, this is not documented.

The AH committee have not been charging rent for this event though it is not a PCC event. The name Parish and the free rent and the fact that members of the congregation may have felt they were at a parish event all expose the PCC as there is no accounting for the monies collected, they are not counted by two people, nor are accounts available.

Proposal

The PCC will A. Study the AH constitution B. Write to the AH and invite the "chair" to the end of the next PCC

Proposed VC Seconded Rj carried unanimously.

Action PCC

5. Minutes of previous meeting

All present approved the minutes as a true and accurate record.
With section on HR as "part 2" minute .

Proposal

The PCC accept the minutes as an accurate record of the previous meeting.

Proposed VC Sec KD carried unanimously

Proposal

That HR minutes join Safeguarding minutes as Part 2 minutes

Prop SL Sec CL carried with 1 abstention BR

6. Vicar's report

Social media continues to be enormously important to every aspect of the parish ministry under covid restrictions. There is strong positive feedback for the livestreamed services, coming from the UK and internationally. Thanks are due to Tim and Donna for the technical work re live streaming and to Isobel for work with Godly Play week after week. Thanks are due to Tim for his singing during Advent. A number of new people including a family have joined the congregation, having seen the service online or been attracted by the website.

We have delivered foodboxes to keyworker families.

We have continued to encourage the use of the churchyard. It has been rewarding to see the take up of what has been provided; people walking the spirals, using the prayer stations and enjoying the nativity tableaux in the windows.

Thanks to Ruth for her supporting work with families. The Saturday pop up café is also much enjoyed and we are aware of several regulars who are lonely people. We have been taking around £100 per week. Many thanks to Donna.

Thanks to Viv for her work with the prayer and reflections group.

On Christmas Eve there will be a short service for our families in the church at 4pm followed at 5pm by the release of a Christmas story video made by the children and young people. Midnight Eucharist will be at 11:45 and Christmas morning service in the Abbey 9:30. We hope for a Christmas Day Eucharist at 11am at Spooner Row. Confirmation is awaited from Rev Tony Snasdell if he agrees to work with the Vicar and the PCC, and if he has a current PTO (it appears he does not – this means he falls outside the Bishop's licensing and the C of E safeguarding policies).

The practice in this parish has been a Vicar and Wardens meeting as opposed to a Standing Committee. On her appointment Mother Catherine renamed this the Standing Committee and from time to time other officers (Faculty, Treasurer) and parishioners have been invited to come to this meeting. The purpose is to facilitate and oversee the day to day smooth running of the parish.

When Richard Maguire stepped down the Vicar and Wardens asked Vivien Coats to attend the meetings. While she did not have voting rights the additional voice was invaluable. Later. When Jan Hunt left, it was felt more voices were needed. The regular meeting expanded to include Donna Taylor, Stephanie Lyall and Tim Jackson (helping with the accounts.) Again there were not formal voting rights extended but it was felt by the V and CW that these were useful people to help consider matters. The Vicar and Wardens have in this way striven to keep themselves accountable and stop "group think."

The Vicar and Wardens are very conscious that in these times of restriction we do not have the informal encounters and conversations that we used to enjoy, and felt the need for addition input from calm and sober minds. It was noted that the Vicar and Wardens (Standing Committee) have a limit of £1000 in spending PCC funds without the PCC approval.

When large amounts are needed and waiting for the next PCC is not feasible the V and CW have used the V&CW's account. This does not bind the PCC to take up costs unless they are minded to do that.

Given the lockdown the V and CW would like to formalise the place of parishioners on the SC.

Proposal

The PCC agrees to co-opt Tim Jackson, Stephanie Lyall, Vivien Coates, Donna Taylor as members of the Standing Committee and would like to include Andrew Naylor (fabric) and Philip Aldred (Spooner Row) on occasions as the need for their wisdom arises.

[redacted] [redacted] agreed unanimously

7. Bishop's Visitation

Proposal

The Wardens to write to Diocese insisting PCC fully consulted as a body.

[redacted] carried unanimously

[redacted]

AN: notes Diocese (section 6) want PCC to abandon the Parish's claim to the Vicarage.

SM: The terms make it clear that the intense harassment suffered by the Vicar, Wardens and parish during the last two years was the Diocesan response to the discovery that the Vicarage transactions were invalid.

Proposal

The PCC will seek more advice from Ian Blaney of LBMW.

[redacted] carried unanimously

[redacted]

7. Finance

TJ prepared a draft balance sheet for 2020. The expenditure for 2020 was a little less than for previous years, income has fallen. Covid and ongoing Diocesan harassment have reduced giving.

The PCC did not wish to pay Parish share for 2020. TJ advised that to pay would be irresponsible.

Proposal:

The PCC will not pay Parish Share for 2020.

carried with one against

9. Staffing and Redundancies

Everything has been done properly by professionals as agreed at previous PCC meetings. Although CoVid19 brought new urgency the PCC had been considering restructuring for some time as salaries were too burdensome. There were 5 employees before the restructure and now there are two. These are the PA and the Parish Assistant.
The PCC received timeline of the conduct of all 5 “restructuring reviews.”

8. Properties

A the schoolroom See section 11 below

B the Vicarage

We have instructed the PCC’s legal representatives to continue to pursue the return of the Vicarage. A report of the Diocese’s illegal transaction is with the Charity Commission.

C the Abbey Hall
Discussed above

D. Spooner Row

There is a wedding on Friday 18 Dec 2020.

A service is intended on Christmas Day with the proviso that

- Tony Snasdell speaks to the Vicar to arrange things in a regular fashion
Provided evidence of PTO agreement to work with the parish vicar and PCC and has current safeguarding training.
- That there is a proper, thorough Risk Assessment in place and proper measures in place.

11. Papillon Trust

The Trust continue to refuse to work with the Abbey including the Abbey families minister in any meaningful way. They have refused to engage with the needs of children and will let others but not the PCC put sheep on the meadow. In 2020 they announced a rent rise with effect from Jan 2021 on the school rooms. The trust’s Covid response was to insist the rent was paid urgently when many landlords were waiving rent until the crisis was over.

This rise in rent, the combative style of the Trust together with the massive drop in income, current financial uncertainty and the work from home instruction, decided the SC to leave the building. Saving rent into the future.

The Vicar, Wardens, PCC and RJ (families ministry) have asked the trust to allow access to the meadow in order to further the religious education of children, to make it available for wellbeing work and to allow Abbey work and projects access to a safe wide open space. Early on this was a response to the increase in anxiety in children and the tragic suicides of children in Wymondham. CoVid lockdown has made wellbeing work more pressing.

The PCC has offered to purchase the schoolroom and to purchase/ / share/ rent the meadow as we see opportunities for encouraging wellbeing in the parish.

PT refuse to co-operate.

The SC are concerned that the PT do not accept and do not care about the pressing needs of children or the objectives of their trust.

Proposal

The PCC to write to the PT to ask if the outstanding rent can be paid in instalments.

████████████████████ agreed unanimously

Proposal

Draft a second letter to the PT two weeks later about our ideas for the future, send it to PCC for comments.

████████████████████ agreed unanimously

████████████████████

Proposal RJ to write again to the Papillon Trust outlining the pressing needs of young children and highlighting the PCCs concerns and hope to work together towards a shared goal in caring for Wymondham's children.

████████████████████ carried unanimously

12. Fabric

AN : delays to the roof works require a second Bat Survey. There are 3 or 4 bats which have 6 boxes in the churchyard, funded by the Pres Trust. The work on the chancel roof, windows and North Aisle roof is complete.

The loose plaster is now safe. The architect is coming week of 11 Dec to inspect and certify it. Lead theft deterrent has been applied.

Lighting and Sound.

The Lighting work begins on 6th January and should be complete by Feb 26th. The Sound installation will follow during March. It should all be completed by Easter.

Utilities needed much attention. We have better contracts, and also better understanding of the controls. The faculty for the outside sockets has been granted and the electricians booked for Thursday next week, allowing outside lights for Christmas

The alarm system has been updated and ought no longer to go off in error during the night.

Next priorities

Roof leaks.

The falling stone in the E Tower (the reason we have the walkway)

A survey of the sedilia.

The organ has been played weekly as is recommended by the CofE. (Thanks to BD)

The muniment room dehumidifier is emptied once a week (thanks to BD).

13. Safeguarding

Part 2 minutes

A couple of issues dismissed from the CDM have been resurrected by the Visitation plus a new one re problems around gift giving and behaviour in church.

Stringent safeguarding is in place for Abbey Children meeting on Zoom.

14. Mission and outreach

- Actively supporting and encouraging regular worshippers.
- Offering direction and help to people seeking God.
- Pointing out the ordinary and beautiful ways to encounter God in amongst everyday living
- Consciously supporting the health and wellbeing of the people of Wymondham and Spooner Row
- Developing the churchyard as a place of warmth and welcome, peace and calm, an expression of God's generous love
- Extending this to SR – perhaps with a table and a bench in the SR grounds
- Using signs, activities and social media to speak of God's love and presence

Proposal

The PCC supports the principles outlined above and wishes to continue with the current activities as a Covid Response.



carried unanimously

The meeting closed with the Grace.

9.05pm