



PARISH OF GREAT BERKHAMSTED

Meeting of the Parochial Church Council held in The Court House
on Tuesday 14th May 2019 at 8pm

MINUTES

Present: Fr. Tim (chair), Julian Dawson (secretary), Mark Grego, Alan Conway, Carole Dell, David Northcott, Christopher Green, Pru Murray, John Gerry, Hilary Elliott, Astrid Biddle, Tim Hennessey, Caroline Charman, Penny Abbot, Richard Currie, Fr Simon, Christopher Beauchamp, Jon Lee.

1. Prayers
2. Apologies: Richard Hackworth, Alison McMunn, Olivia Davies.
3. Notification of matters for consideration under Any Other Business
None
4. Approval of Minutes of the PCC Meeting held on 26th February 2019: Approved.
5. Matters Arising: None
6. Standing Committee Reports

South Transept Ceiling – TH said there has been some dissatisfaction in the way the Court House project was supervised and how our nominated architect (Mark Battram) provided his invoice and signed off the works when they were incomplete. Due to these concerns, TH is recommending that we should get a second opinion from an alternative surveyor before embarking on a second building project. If we were to take this advice, it would need to be approved by the DAC.

CG asked if it was the Standing Committee's proposal to discontinue using Mark Battram as our Inspecting Architect. TH said the proposal was not to challenge Mark at the present time but to firstly compare the two sets of advice regarding the south transept roof.

RC asked whether Mark Battram provided his advice at a subsidised rate. TH said that he felt Mark had provided excellent supervision in the past but there was a concern that he had signed off the Court House roof work when it was patently unsafe and progress to that point had been very slow.

CG asked for it to be noted that the decision to seek a second opinion on the repairs required to the south transept roof was against his advice and that he had recommended Mark continued with the work, particularly as he had looked at a similar plaster fall in 2009.

TH asked that the PCC endorsed the recommendation to seek the opinion of another surveyor.

Proposer – Tim Hennessey
Seconder – Richard Currie

All in favour – 16 in favour.
Abstain – 2

7. Committee and Group Appointments

The following were appointed to serve on the PCC for the year 2019/20.

- Richard Hackworth – Hon Treasurer
- Julian Dawson – Hon Secretary
- Hilary Elliott, Astrid Biddle and Carolyn Charman have agreed to stand as Deputy Churchwardens.

Proposer – Richard Currie
Seconder - Mark Grego
All in favour.

John Lee, Christopher Beauchamp and Pru Murray (publicity officer) were co-opted onto the PCC. Christopher Green agreed to remain as Chairman of Diocesan Advisory Committee.

All in favour.

The following were appointed into the following positions:

- Honorary Electoral Role officer – Hilary Armstrong
- All Saint Council St Peters Rep – Barbara Conway
- Team council Reps – Mark Grego and Tim Hennessey
- Health and Safety Officer - John Abbott
- Publicity Officer – Pru Murray
- Trusteeship coordinator – Jane Bartholomew
- Minutes Secretary - Olivia Davies

The Finance Committee not met for five years. Richard Hackworth proposed via the Finance paper that for time being Finance Committee is dissolved. TH said that it was a concern to do this as fundraising and stewardship may be an issue for the church in due course and will need managing. This may need a new committee. After discussion it was felt that a Stewardship and Fundraising group was needed and perhaps Richard could approach people who may be good members of that. All happy with that decision.

Youth Committee

The committee has not met and it was noted that there were very few youth members in church. It was agreed not to disband the committee at this point as Father Joe (new priest in Potten End, coming in September) may have some input into this group in due course.

Building Committee

All happy to continue on the committee.

Worship and Liturgy Group

Committee to remain as is although has not met recently.

Pastoral Group

This group continues to meet regularly.

8. Committee/Group Reports

Finance Committee

RH presented his report via email. All happy to receive his report.

Buildings Committee

Further to the Buildings Committee report there was a discussion whether we engage with the town's Heritage Hub project to look at securing lottery funding to renovate areas of the church and Court House for promoting the town's history and providing a shared community facility.

TH said the PCC need to formally agree whether we engage with the project and highlighted that there are things we would wish to do to the church but are unable to do as part of our own giving. This project may be an enabler for these. He also noted that James Moir and his team were very successful in raising lottery money for St Peter's churchyard and we could benefit considerably from their expertise.

Father Tim said if he was staying on as a Rector he would recommend we continue with discussions as it could be phenomenally exciting. He also noted that we would have the veto in the long run and unless we explore we don't know what is on offer.

MG said we need to ask what the purpose is at each stage. What are we going to get out of it? If we are not happy, we need to state that we are not going to continue.

JG advised that he was on a committee looking at re-orientating the festival of light and introducing a carnival and there could be a possibility of aligning with this.

AC said he was very unhappy about proposal. He felt we needed to look at objectives before proceeding and suggested a low-key start, perhaps running an exhibition first about town's history before engaging with significant work. He also felt it might be better to use the Court House Long room for activity rather than the church but felt pilots were the way forward before going ahead with a major project.

JL requested that future meetings were in the evening so people who work in the day can attend.

It was also felt that we needed to look at what things needed doing in the church over the next ten years and build them into any project plan, for example, RC said we could make a case for including funding for a new organ.

The PCC agreed to explore this project further with the Heritage Hub team.

CG asked the PCC to please refer to the Buildings Committee report for all other items.

Father Tim highlighted that the Church Project Consultation paper (looking at funding for Catherine Chapel, Court House), circulated by Richard Hackworth with the Finance Report was extremely helpful. He asked it be brought to the next PCC meeting for discussion and approval.

Finally, CG talked about the issue of introducing snow guards onto the Court House to protect from falling tiles. It is a listed building and therefore we need permission to put these on plus listed building consent from Dacorum Borough Council. Clive Freestone looks after this building and is willing to act as agent. The applicant has to be the owner of the building and it was agreed the Churchwardens would be listed on the form as current owners. CG felt it was an immediate priority to add on snow guards as some tiles have fallen off recently.

PCC to introduce snow guards onto the Court House Roof.

Proposed: Christopher Green

Seconded: Alan Conway

Carried.

Clive Freestone to implement the necessary paperwork.

Pastoral Group

Not met.

Courthouse Group

Not met.

Cowper Society

Management of events in St Peter's s being simplified, with different arrangements in place to make it less onerous for the people in responsibility.

Communications Update:

PM said Any Questions in the church had been well attended. She highlighted that The Hospice of St Francis was 40 years old in June (it was founded following a prayer vigil at St Peter's in June 1979) and said a prayer vigil is being held on 6 June 4-8pm to give thanks and pray for the future of the Hospice. A special memory walk will also take place on Saturday 29th June and will pass through the church. Finally, Pru is promoting and organising a coffee morning in aid of the Hospice on Saturday 22 June.

9. Diocesan & Deanery Synod Meetings

Nothing to report.

10. Tidiness

Mark Grego raised that he had systematically decluttered the church over the past few years, for example removing mess from the West End. He is organising for new noticeboards on the south aisle wall. You will see them in the distance and the aim is to give a better view of the aisle and improve tidiness. He was firmly of the opinion that clutter gets in the way of the purpose of the church. If in doubt, strip it out!

CG said he felt that St Peter's church is amongst the tidiness and least cluttered in the Diocese. He would like to see some removal of clutter but didn't feel the church was in a desperate condition. JL requested that the bookshelf behind the organ can go.

11. Safeguarding update

Hilary has circulated the modern safeguarding policy from the Diocese which needs adopting and asked that all agree to its adoption.

Proposer: Hilary Elliott
Seconder: Carole Dell

All in favour.

TH asked that HE double check our insurance cover to ensure it is appropriate to be named in the Safeguarding policy..

12. Date of Next Meeting – **PCC 18th June 8pm.**

13. Any Other Business

Father Tim advised that the Suffragan Bishop may come to the October meeting to speak to PCC.

Father Tim and Simon have decided the time has come to press the pause button on the 4pm TSS Family service due to numbers. Olivia's priority should remain focused on 9:30am Sunday Club. This decision could be reconsidered in the future.

It was noted that the newly appointed priest at Potten End will give a third of his time to St Peter's with special oversight of schools' work. He is being inducted on 2nd September.

Penny Fray is training to be a reader. Readers often take a diaconal role in the Eucharist. Penny may have some singing lessons with Father Simon to see if she could also take Choral Evensong. It will be a way of preparing and involving her. She will be a sub deacon from August.

14. The Meeting concluded at 9 p.m with The Grace.