

# *Parish of West Grinstead*

## PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday 19 November 2024 at 7.30pm at Hydon, Partridge Green

### MINUTES

#### PRESENT

Rev'd. Alison Letschka, Chairman  
Mike Phillips, Churchwarden  
Neil Jacobsen, Churchwarden  
Beryl Payne, Secretary  
Karen Adams, Safeguarding  
Kit White  
Jayne Montague-Drake  
Bill Holt  
Pat Kelly

Alison opened the meeting with a prayer, particularly in the light of the decision to step down of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

#### 1. APOLOGIES

Rev'd. Caroline Armitage, Paul Taylor, Dave Ellis, Dave Tidey, Kate Wydra, Olivia Izzard

#### 2. MINUTES

##### 2.1 Minutes for the last meeting Tuesday 17 September

These were proposed as a correct record by Mike Phillips and seconded by Pat Kelly and approved unanimously.

##### 2.2 Matters arising and action point follow up (not covered elsewhere in this meeting)

- Risk assessments for both churches are nearing completion and will be ready to present at the next PCC meeting. *Action Neil*

#### 3 PCC MATTERS

##### 3.1 PCC registration with Charities Commission

Neil is due to submit the application imminently – *Action Neil*

##### 3.2 Fire Security

The Secretary had circulated a paper prior to the meeting outlining the problem with our existing company disappearing. It was agreed that Mike would research an alternative fire company. *Action Mike*

##### 3.3 Electricity supply provider at St George's

The dispute with SSE has been resolved and a refund obtained.

The Secretary had been contacted by Utility Warehouse who had offered to give us a quote, but we have now changed to Octopus Energy. Will the Smart-meter work with Octopus?

*Action Mike*

##### 3.4 The Riso printer at St Michael's

The Secretary had circulated a paper prior to the meeting about maintenance (*attached*).

After some discussion about what we need, namely duplex and collation, it was decided that she would approach Parish Buying and also speak with the Parish Administrator at St Peter's Henfield re their machine. *Action Secretary*

##### 3.5 Review Computer Use and Social Media policy

An updated version had been circulated prior to the meeting (*attached*). Alison explained the points that had been changed and it was agreed and adopted by the meeting.

##### 3.6 PCC voting by correspondence (email)

The Secretary had circulated a paper prior to the meeting (*attached*) advising that the old system had been replaced with a new system - see Church Representation Rules M29 and giving some suggestions as to what we could do.

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It was proposed by Mike Phillips that:

- (i) the Churchwardens' Financial Approval Limit be increased to £1,000 providing that both Churchwardens and the Rector were all in agreement.
- (ii) Spends of over £1,000 using email voting would be initiated by the Rector to the Secretary.

This change was seconded by Pat Kelly and agreed by the meeting.

The additions to Minutes from previous email voting are appended to these Minutes.

### **4. FINANCE**

#### **4.1 Treasurer's Report and Accounts and 4.2 2023 Accounts progress**

In the absence of the Treasurer, Mike explained that Paul Taylor had been unexpectedly thwarted in his plans to retire from his job and that he had been required to concentrate on this as a priority, meaning that the 2023 accounts had not been prepared in the submissible format and that we may have to submit a truncated version for 2023 to the Charities Commission.

#### **4.3 Change of bank account – to be C/F *Action Secretary***

#### **4.4 Clergy Conference 2025 PCC contribution**

Mike Phillips proposed that the PCC agree to contribute £300 for each of the two delegates, Rev'd. Alison and Rev'd. Caroline. This was seconded by Pat Kelly with all in agreement.

#### **4.5 Parish Share**

After some discussion, it was generally agreed that we would stick to what we had said in our 5-year plan as this had been carefully thought out and presented to not only the Diocese, but our congregations. To be C/F to the January meeting when more members should be present. *Action Secretary*

#### **4.5 Review of Reserves policy**

The Treasurer was to have presented a new Reserves policy, so item C/F. *Action Treasurer, Secretary*

### **5. MISSION**

#### **5.1 Parish-wide survey project**

A very nice survey had been drawn up by Michael White, one of the congregation at Worship @11 of St Michael's, in the form of a questionnaire designed to ascertain what our congregations and the wider public think about, and want from, the church. It is to be launched immediately on the Parish email, our Facebook page and the website. Results will also be collated by him.

#### **5.2 Bereavement Group update**

This is now up and running with the first meeting having happened on 16 October and with a good turnout. A report and copy of the brochure from Kate Wydra had been circulated prior to the meeting. (*attached*).

#### **5.3 Eco church update.**

A report from Rev'd. Caroline had been circulated prior to the meeting (*attached*).

### **6. REPORT FROM THE CHAIR**

Alison reported that:

- Recent safeguarding issues concerning a priest and resulting in the resignation of the Archbishop of Canterbury, had rather overshadowed things.
- The Parish Remembrance service held at St George's had a -pleasing turnout including the uniforms.
- The three Home Groups in the Parish are doing well and will now concentrate on 2025 as being The Year of Faith.

## **7. FABRIC**

Some notes from Dave Tidey had been circulated prior to the meeting (*attached*) making an amendment to the last meeting's Minutes (corrected) and in his absence, Alison reported that:

### **7.1 St George's**

- There had been a meeting with herself and Dave Tidey and Tobit Curteis Regarding the environment of the church and advising that it was no longer necessary to monitor this because it was costing us money and the existing background heating would keep the worst of the damp at bay.
- She then asked Neil to give an update on the Extension. Neil reported that nothing had been heard from the DAC since the discussions in July and October. He said he would be inclined to ignore the DAC and Historic England's spurious objection as we have now obtained the go ahead from all the requisite bodies. Alison said she would speak to Archdeacon Angela. *Action Alison*

### **7.2 St Michael's**

- The pump (sump) had been replaced as a matter of urgency because it had failed and there was a danger of flooding and it had tripped the electricity switch.
- There is a need to instal a PIR light and a quote for £300 has been received, which seems reasonable. Mike Phillips proposed that we go ahead with this and Pat Kelly seconded this, with all in agreement.

## **8. SAFEGUARDING**

### **8.1 PCC approval of The Code of Safer Working Practice**

This had been circulated prior to the meeting (*attached*) Alison read out the salient points and requested the document be emailed to her to sign and we can then publish on our website, noticeboards etc. *Action Secretary*

### **8.2 A safeguarding report had been circulated prior to the meeting (*attached*).**

The required safeguarding training is online for anyone who needs it and there is to be a training session on Saturday 23 November for those who do not have online access.

## **9. CORRESPONDENCE**

The Secretary had been contacted by Utility Aid regarding the electricity supply, offering free advice and to quote for this. They had followed it up in writing (*attached*). Our Fabric Manager had already elected to go with Octopus, so NFA.

## **10. CONFIDENTIALITY & PUBLICATION OF MINUTES – OK to publish.**

## **11. A.O.B.**

Alison reported that there is a new Foundation Governor at Jolesfield School, Fiona Bossenger, who lives in Partridge Green and works for Nestlé. There was general approval of this.

## **12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 14 January 2025 at 7.30pm at Hydon.

Alison closed the meeting at 9pm by inviting members to share the Grace.

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### APPENDIX

Additions to Minutes from previous email voting results, which should have been minuted in each subsequent meeting's Minutes under Matters arising.

**2020**

**13 March - To approve the corrected Annual Financial Report for 2019.**

Yes 11

No 0

**2021**

**30 July – To approve the Motion that the PCC authorises Ian Balls to apply for an Archdeacon's loan of £50,000 to assist with cash flow at the commencement of building works in September 2021.**

Yes 10

Reservations 1 Dr A Martin

**2022**

**10 February – to authorise Dave Tidey's proposal for him to engage Bernwood, the bat ecologists, to extend the Bat Licence (St George's) to include the re-roofing of the porch, and additionally the ecologist's time for monitoring the rafter repairs works, (already approved by the PCC). The cost for this licence extension will be between £1,500 and £2,000 plus VAT.**

Yes 11

No 0

**2023**

**26 October – For the PCC to agree for the access ramp design for St Michael's, proposed by Cerowski Architects, to be sent to the DAC for Faculty approval.**

Yes 11

No 1 N Holt

Abstentions 0

**2024**

**26 October – To approve the revised quote of £24,000 from the approved Radford Building Services for the ramp at St Michael's, originally quoted at £17,000.**

Yes 7

Reservations 2 D Tidey and B Payne

No response 2

**8 August – PCC approval for removal of ash tree in St Michael's churchyard for a cost of £850.**

Yes 10

No response 2

**4 October – PCC approval for the urgent installation of a new pump, the old having failed, and associated works.**

Electrician £240 incl. VAT

New pump £336 incl. VAT

Pump out and sludge removal by Sweeptech £400 incl. VAT

Total £976 approx.