

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY

*Minutes of a meeting of the Parochial Church Council
held in the Church Hall on Wednesday 20 January 2010*

Present: Huw Nicholas in the chair, Cathy Rogers, Amanda Ferris, Margaret Bell, Morag Broadbent, Mike Farron, Gavin Horner, Claire Pedrick, Dianne Sheppee, Andrew Stoten, Paul Thomson, Roger Thomson, and Ray Tye.

Apologies: Margaret Dack, Claire Harald, Ian McMullen, Margaret Owen and Judy Watson.

Gavin Horner opened the meeting in prayer.

09/57 Approval of minutes of PCC meeting held 25 November 2009

These were approved and signed.

09/58 Matters arising

- a) From 09/45, nothing further has been heard about the proposed Shoebox appeal by Laura Sowden. Amanda Ferris will ask Vicky Cameron if we have further details. **ACTION: AF**
- b) From 09/49, Ray Tye advised that discussion of the proposed "musical event" will be deferred until after 19 May.

09/59 Matters arising from Standing Committee held on 5 January 2010

- a) The invoice for the hall curtains has been received and paid.
- b) Jo Nice has completed the gloss paintwork in the vicarage, except for the hatch to the loft.
- c) Huw Nicholas has advised Jeremy Goodwyn and Rosemary Cowie about the need for Enhanced CRB Disclosures for their drivers.
- d) The vestry door has been fixed by Seamus.
- e) Mr Kins has had a hernia operation, hence the lack of response. He has agreed to contact Vicky Cameron when he can inspect the high-level guttering. It is evident however that at least some joints will need to be renewed and that scaffolding will be needed.
- f) Simon and Louise Moore wish to replace additional carpets in the vicarage.
- g) The Steve Robson quiz for the Nivens will be on 24th April, not 21st April as minuted.
- h) For the APCM on 25 April Clare Townsend will make arrangements for the children; Roger Thomson will speak to Gill Farron about the Electoral Roll; and Madeleine Nicholas will coordinate the group reports.

ACTION: CT; RT and MN

09/60 Finance

Andrew Stoten reported that our income for 2009 has been finalised at £172,414. The expenditure account is still open. This means that the Missionary Committee has £21,706 to allocate. He will have the 2009 accounts ready for approval at the 17 March PCC meeting. **ACTION: AS**

09/61 Budget for 2010

Andrew Stoten reported that our parish share has been reduced by £1800. He proposes to add this sum to "Hall expenses" to maintain a balanced budget of £148,000.

He has spoken to CAF about the investment of our funds to obtain a higher rate of interest. They advised that one has to tie the investment for at least 5 years to do this. It was agreed that we should do nothing now, in view of the forthcoming quinquennial inspection and the likelihood that interest rates will rise.

09/62 Fabric

Huw Nicholas reported that the edges of the steps between the church and the hall are disintegrating in places and need repair. Chris Cheesman is to be asked for an estimate. **ACTION: HN**

Cathy Rogers reported that:

- The upper hall floor needs attention. Alan, the cleaner, proposes to remove the seal and apply 3 new coats of sealant. The room would be out of use for 5 days. The cost would be about £930 + VAT to include the hire of the machine. It would then need to be scrubbed and sealed in 2 years' time. The alternative of fitting a carpet-type material is not considered appropriate in view of the types of user in this room.
- The main hall also needs attention. A deep gouge has been made in the surface and numerous gaps between the blocks of the flooring have appeared recently. These need to be filled as soon as possible to prevent ingress of water. Alan has proposed that we use the contractor whom we used last time to carry out a complete sanding of the floor, followed by sealing with RainGuard, as before. The badminton lines would then be repainted. The approximate cost would be £2900 + VAT. The hall would be out of use for 8 days, which would mean doing it in April during the Easter break. It was agreed that an 8-day slot should be booked with Vicky now, but that before a contractor is booked we should obtain advice on the cause of the gaps. Subject to that proviso, Huw proposed that we should proceed with both floors, and this was agreed. He asked for names of a surveyor who could advise us. **ACTION: HN**
- The new hall stage curtains and/or the track need to be adjusted: date to be arranged.
- The damaged chalice is still with the repairers.

09/63 APCM – 25 April 2010

This will take place at 11.00am in the church hall. We shall need to elect 1 churchwarden and 4 PCC members: Margaret Bell, Morag Broadbent, Ian McMullen and Dianne Sheppee will be retiring from the PCC. It was hoped that both Revd Margaret Dack and Revd Amanda Ferris would be present.

09/64 Church Land Registration

Huw Nicholas reported that church land now needs to be registered. Through the Diocese the church and the church hall are now registered with the Land Registry. We are awaiting registration of the vicarage.

09/65 Reprographic needs

The lease on the Risograph in the church office expires in February. It has produced 366,000 copies in the last 5 years. Dave Dibden has confirmed that a new lease on the machine is not an option. He has provided figures which indicate that a new Risograph EZ200 would cost us only marginally more than at present, due to the need for fewer consumables. There would also be no servicing costs for the first year. It was agreed to go ahead with a 5 year lease on a new machine, and also to keep the existing photocopier, which costs very little.

ACTION: HN

09/66 Letchworth Festival – 26 June to 11 July

Roger Thomson outlined the aims of the festival, namely to encourage groups in the town to put on an event, on any theme, be it music, drama, children, sport, lifestyle, etc. The PCC did not see its way to participating, but was prepared to offer the church and/or hall as a venue. Roger Thomson to advise the festival chairman.

ACTION: Roger T.

9/67 Deanery Synod report

The January meeting clashed with this PCC meeting.

09/68 Vacancy update

The Order of Service for 19th May is being prepared by the Diocese. Discussion centred on who should be invited, as a maximum of about 330 can be seated in the church. It will be a ticketed event. Simon and Louise have been asked for a list of their invitees. Huw invited members to forward to him names of those who should be considered. Representatives from the hospice will be included. It was suggested that invitations should perhaps go to the managers of Sainsburys and the Leisure Centre, which are within our parish. The possibility of relaying the service to the church hall was mentioned, and will be investigated.

ACTION: HN

09/69 Correspondence

1) Peter Rose had asked who is legally responsible for church events which are not covered by our insurance. The Diocesan Registrar has advised that it is the wardens and the PCC. However, our insurers cover us, third party, for a wide range of matters. If we were subjected to legal action, the other party would need to prove negligence, i.e. that there had been a breach of the duty of care, and that they had suffered damage. Even so, our insurers advise that we would still be covered by our insurance, even if we were negligent.

2) A letter has been received from Peter Deary querying the need for Enhanced Disclosures from the CRB for Luncheon Club and Lifts to Church drivers. Recent press adverts for the new Vetting and Barring Agency have proved to be confusing. Judy Watson, our Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Officer, has replied to him clarifying the changes in legislation. In summary, all employers, including the Diocese (and St Pauls), will be required **by law** to put the Vetting and Barring scheme in place for people starting work in “new” roles from July 2010. For everyone else the scheme will be phased in over 5 years as their current Disclosures expire. The new legislation makes **no** difference to the requirement by the Diocese for an Enhanced Disclosure from the CRB for anyone working with children or vulnerable adults at present. This may change as the new legislation takes effect, but the current advice is that CRB checks are still needed. There is no direct charge to individual volunteers or the Church for either the CRB or the ISA checks, though the costs are of course borne by the taxpayer.

The PCC confirmed that we need to conform to Diocesan advice and so **all** drivers bringing people to a Church event on a rota basis **must** obtain an Enhanced Disclosure from the CRB. Huw will also write to Peter Deary.

ACTION: HN

3) In the parish bundle was details of a morning with Bishop Alan Smith and Mark Hope-Urwin from Birmingham Cathedral on Saturday 27th March at St George’s Church on the theology, importance and practicalities of welcome. Roger Thomson to email details to PCC members and put details in the weekly Notices.

ACTION: Roger T.

4) Peter Rose has asked whether we are supporting the Haiti relief appeal as a church. It was agreed that we will collect until the end of February, with Christian Aid as the recipient. Andrew Stoten confirmed that we can claim Gift Aid if suitable envelopes are used, bearing the giver’s signature and postcode. Cathy Rogers will ask Vicky to prepare suitably labelled envelopes and Amanda will explain the procedure in church on Sunday. Cathy will also draft a paragraph for the weekly Notices.

ACTION: CR and VC

5) Clare Townsend has asked whether we will be supporting the “Passion for Life” project which runs from 14 to 20 March and is being led by Christ Church, Baldock. It was agreed that in view of the vacancy we cannot commit to it but that we would contribute £100 towards the expenses of the mission. Roger Thomson will write to whomsoever Clare advises should receive the cheque.

ACTION: Roger T.

09/70 Any other business

- 1) Ray Tye reminded the PCC of the Barn Dance to take place on Saturday 27 February.
- 2) Ray Tye reported that he has booked Kingshott School on the afternoon of Saturday 10 July for a family gathering. There will be swimming, tennis, picnics, etc. and all will be welcome.

The meeting closed at 9.40pm. with the Grace.