



Minutes of the Parochial Church Council

Tuesday 25th February 2025 at 19.30

Committee Room

In the chair: Fr Henry Pryse (Fr H) delegated to Joan Ridgway (JR)

Minutes: Jill Mather

Present: Caroline Adams (CA), Tim Bayton (TB), Susan Coombs (SC), Anne Killingback (AK), Rachel Martindill (RM), Jill Mather (JMM), Joanna Mimmack (JM), Gary Patch (GP), Mike Payne (MGP), Marilyn Pegg (MP), Fr Henry Pryse (Fr H), Pat Read (PR), Joan Ridgway (JR), Nigel Ridgway (NR), Jim Weeks (JW), Nigel Williams (NW)

Fr H opened the meeting with prayer.

1. **Apologies:** Andrew Mimmack (AM)
2. **Correspondence to the PCC** (previously circulated by email) was received. (See file)
3. **The Minutes of the PCC meeting (26.11.24) were approved.** (Proposed NR, seconded RM, approved by all those who had been at the meeting.)

The notes of the Standing Committee (29.01.25) were received.

4. **Questions and matters arising from the Minutes of the PCC meeting on 26.11.24**

a) Minute 5ii: Next steps in Mission Action Planning (MAP) / Parish Survey (GP & NR)

- i. NR reminded the meeting that the PCC had been asked to submit comments and to volunteer areas they might be willing/able to support and lead. A few contributions had been made and the annotated plan circulated.
- ii. NR suggested that the first three action areas might be seen as those which we are already doing and only the last three as ones offering new areas. TB agreed and GP identified the need to decide whether the MAP should focus on what is already done or on new initiatives.

- iii. TB suggested the MAP might also be clearer about the key development areas before asking people to populate them with examples.
- iv. CA suggested that “possible ideas” might be offered when seeking contributions.
- v. In order to produce a MAP which took forward the ideas emerging from the discussion, GP proposed an extended session where the whole PCC could concentrate on drawing up and “owning” the MAP. ***It was agreed that as many who can make it will meet during coffee, in the Committee Room, after the Eucharist on Sunday 9th March.***

b) Minute 5iii: Outreach to Old Coal Yard new residents (JR)

- i. JR had circulated a document of information from the outreach projects carried out by Pinhoe and St Leonard’s (see file).
- ii. TB pointed out the urgency, as around 50 dwellings would be occupied by the next Contact magazine delivery.
- iii. JR and TB also suggested that A6 cards or A5 flyers should be designed and produced for each house, possibly using the angel sculpture cards. These could be delivered alongside Contact.
- iv. ***Action: NR will speak to the site manager to find out the completion date; GP and TB volunteered to produce the wording of the welcome card.***

Matters brought to the PCC from the Standing Committee meeting on 29.01.25

c) Note 6: proposal to extend the role of the hall lettings administrative officer (NR)

- i. Details of the proposal had been circulated to the PCC before the meeting (see file).
- ii. NR summarised his proposal which was ***agreed wholeheartedly by the PCC***. It was also agreed that a laptop be bought for the administrator – Michelle in the first instance. (Proposed NR, seconded TB, unanimously agreed.) ***Action: NR.***

5. Questions and matters arising from the Rector’s report

- i. The PCC received with thanks the report previously submitted by Fr H (see file).

6. Questions and Matters Arising from the Treasurer’s Report; adoption of draft Accounts (NR)

- i. The PCC received with thanks the financial reports previously submitted by NR (see file).
- ii. The PCC adopted the draft Annual Accounts (see 8.iv).

7. Questions & Matters Arising from the Safeguarding Report and Safeguarding Dashboard (CA)

- i. The PCC received with thanks the Safeguarding report and supporting discussion documents previously submitted by CA (see file).

- ii. CA stated that at the time of the meeting the Safeguarding Dashboard showed as 94% compliant in the mandatory requirements. With the discussion of Lone Working and Appropriate Boundaries completed at the November PCC, and with the discussions at this meeting, the 5 Safeguarding Standards will have been almost completely met. Her report to the PCC (see file) outlines clearly the DBS checks currently being refreshed and the volunteer catch-up discussions in progress.
- iii. **Safeguarding Standard 4 relating to Victims and Survivors.** CA reported her discussion on 13.01.25 with Fr Henry and the churchwardens to answer the question: "Have the incumbent and Parish Safeguarding Representative discussed how the church might better respond to victims and survivors?"

Actions from that meeting

It was felt that we could make ourselves better known and visible by having pictures on the noticeboard in church. In this way everyone would be able to recognise those with a safeguarding responsibility. They also recommended the inclusion of pictures of Andrew Mimmack and Caroline Adams as safeguarding representatives in *Contact*, as well as pictures of Fr Henry, Joan Ridgway and the churchwardens. **Action: CA.**

In the aftermath of a disclosure from a victim or survivor, it was noted that the approach for support from the diocesan team is included in our Safeguarding Policy. The need to work with the diocesan team was reiterated.

- iv. **Safeguarding Standard 2 – Prevention - Risks with Buildings.** CA reported her discussion (also on 13.01.25 with Fr Henry and the churchwardens) to answer the question: "Are all the staff and volunteers aware of the safeguarding risks associated with the layout of their church buildings? For example, "Staff and volunteers are aware of the safeguarding risks that are associated with the layout of their church building (eg access to toilets and potential blind spots)."

It was noted that risk assessments are reviewed regularly in ongoing support discussions, including the risks associated with lone working and maintaining appropriate boundaries. The layout of our church buildings is such that there are very few blind spots and most doors (choir vestry, priest vestry, hall doors) have windows so even when they are closed the room is not completely unseen.

We consider this point is completed.

- v. **Discussion of Standard 5 Worksheet 5A: supporting those in safeguarding roles.** CA outlined some of the challenges of the role and reported that she did feel supported by the team at St James' – and not acting on her own – as well as by the diocesan team. Fr H reiterated the support of the diocese. The PCC also has safeguarding as a standing item and CA also commended the St James' community for its willingness to complete training. NR raised the question of whether churches should have CCTV in their buildings. CA asked the PCC to keep encouraging her in the role.

- vi. **Discussion of Standard I Worksheet IB: promoting the welfare of vulnerable groups.** CA reported the work of Fr H and the pastoral care team; Safeguarding is also an item at the APCM; the diocesan safeguarding officer has also been invited to St James'. An ongoing action is for everyone to be vigilant of those who might be vulnerable in our church and to bring this to the attention of those in leadership.
- vii. **Discussion of Standard I Worksheet IA: promoting a healthy and safe culture.** PCC discussed the culture, and particularly the section on communication, referred to in worksheet IA. The feeling of those long-established members of the congregation is that it is a compassionate, safe and welcoming community. The PCC discussed, though, the challenge of welcoming new people, although there is a strong desire and practice of encouraging people into coffee which is deemed to be welcoming and warm occasion. An action to take forward was for PCC members to be even more proactive in inviting people into coffee time after church and putting them at ease.

8. Questions and Matters Arising from the Churchwardens' Report and adoption of Annual Statutory Report and Accounts (RM & AM)

- i. The PCC received with thanks the report previously submitted by RM.
- ii. RM reported that the new electoral roll currently stands at 127 (deadline 02.03.25). Last year was 156. TB asked if the reduced numbers would affect the number of PCC members: RM was not sure but would know by the APCM.
- iii. NR explained that the Annual Statutory Report reflected positively the extended community of St James' in all its diversity: for example, the 4000 hall users each year; Messy Church and other children's activities and Fresh Expressions; friendship groups, for example, the Friday coffee mornings. Charity donations amounted to over £12000 last year (including £4000 raised for South Sudan Appeal). £37000 was generated through lettings of church and hall.
- iv. NR reported that the independent examiner had already approved the Annual Report and Accounts and the PCC agreed that Fr H and NR could sign them once they had been received.
- v. The PCC duly approved the Annual Report and Financial statements (proposed NR, seconded TB).
- vi. **Action NR & Fr H.**

9. Questions and matters arising from the Committee reports

a) Health and Safety

- i. The PCC received with thanks the report previously submitted by CA (see file).

b) Fabric

- i. The PCC received with thanks the report previously submitted by NR (see file).

- ii. TB raised concerns over water ingress in two roof lights in the church which NR will investigate. **Action: NR.**

c) Young People

- i. The PCC received with thanks the report previously submitted by CA and JMM (see file).

d) Communications

- i. The PCC received with thanks the report previously submitted by TB (see file)

10. Any other business

- i. Erection of a lighted cross on the bell tower (PR)

Following the positive reception of the star on the bell tower during Christmas and Epiphany, PR asked if it would be possible to display a cross at other times, perhaps during Lent, Easter and Advent.

There was an enthusiastic response and RM offered to investigate the practicalities of buying and erecting a star. **Action: RM.**

11. Date of next meeting

Annual Parochial Church Meetings on 23.03.25 at 12.00 in the hall.

12. The meeting closed with the Grace at 20.53.

Jill Mather
Secretary to the PCC
25.02.25