

**Present:** Jema Ball (Vicar/Chair) Simon Potter (Associate Vicar), Hayley Brydges, Angela Cattell, Sonia Home (ASMA Curate), Tony Hughes, Caroline Jowett-Ive (Warden), Andy Judd (Warden), Anna Mayo, Al Meadows, Jo Morris, Caroline Owen (Treasurer & Safeguarding Officer), Kate Pinfold, Nick Powlesland, Brian Richardson, Peter Robottom, Jerry Sandford, Caroline Simpson, Hazel Trapnell, and Stephanie Wren.

**In attendance:** Steve Fairbairn (Secretary).

### **1. OPENING REFLECTION & PRAYER**

Jema opened the meeting with a time of reflection following the recent death of Rev Jennifer Hall. Jema reminded PCC members how Jennifer had been prepared to share her wisdom, and her encyclopaedic knowledge of Church of England mores. Jema noted her unflappable, practical, willing nature and her time spent as PCC secretary and on safeguarding issues. We thanked God for the blessing she had been to St Mary's for so long. Jema then read from 1 Corinthians 13 and called upon PCC members to reflect on its strong message of the importance of love in people's lives.

### **2. APOLOGIES**

Apologies had been received from Tony Yeadon and Lucy Allen

### **3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

#### **3.1 To agree the minutes**

As no questions were raised on the minutes of the January PCC meeting, Jema asked if they could be accepted and this led to the following proposal:-

**Proposal** The minutes of the January PCC meeting can be accepted as a correct record of proceedings.

Proposed. Peter Robottom.      Seconded      Nick Powlesland

Apart from 3 abstentions by members who had not been present at the meeting, the proposal was **agreed** unanimously and Jema signed the minutes.

### **3.2 Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising from the January minutes.

Jema then provided some updates to the PCC members.

Jema reported that a Bishop's Mission Order had been granted to Hazelnut Community Farm and that the related worshipping community had been moved to St. Anne's in Bristol.

Jema also reported that our placement student, Juliet, would be doing a short placement during May and June at the Cathedral, and that we would have a Trinity Placement student with us during June, (Lewis Simonds). Three of our current Placement students, Lucy, Heather and Andrew, are also leaving St. Mary's to move on to their curacies. Jo Morris will also be leaving us both as a member of the PCC and as a minister having taken up the role of chaplain at St. Monica's. PCC members were reminded that Jo had served for about 18 years on the PCC in one role or another and members agreed that Jo would be hugely missed.

### **3.3 Leadership Team Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings on 24<sup>th</sup> January and 28<sup>th</sup> February had been circulated to PCC members. There were no queries on these minutes.

## **4. RESOURCING MISSION**

### **4.1 Our Finances**

Caroline Owen's accounts had been pre-circulated to PCC members and included a first draft of the year end accounts for 2022, together with the Management Accounts for 28<sup>th</sup> Feb 2023 (with associated explanatory notes) and copy of the Actual and Budget Accounts for the year to the end of December 2023.

Caroline reported she has been content with the accounts for the first two months of 2023 in spite of the larger than expected electricity bill.

#### **4.1.1 Annual Report for 2022**

Caroline noted that the formal Annual Report for the end of 2022 is still in draft form and asked members for any comments or corrections. She responded to a query on the "House party income" (see item on page 11) which she explained was money donated after the cancellation of the Lee Abbey House party when many people asked for their Lee Abbey deposits to be kept by the church. Jema commented that our missing the Lee Abbey event this year did allow more time to be given to other issues including the recent sad passing of Jennifer Hall. There were no other questions on the Annual Report.

## **4.1.2 Current Financials and Looking Ahead**

Caroline Owen reported that the accounts for the first two months in 2023 showed a deficit of £12K versus a budgeted deficit of £15K and that this was in spite of recent high electricity prices. A recent £5K legacy from the estate of Barbara Mapstone to funds had been helpful to cover the cost of a new projector and screens. Caroline noted that we are projecting to still have a small amount of reserves by the end of the year. She also commented that there is a separate development fund which could be used to cover deficits, if necessary, but which is usually restricted specifically to church development spending.

Simon Potter stated that a decision will be needed on how to fund the replacement of the church boiler. He noted that our now one year old quote for £16,795 could be covered by the buildings fund or it might come from the development fund. It was also noted that we might do some fund raising for a new boiler. Jema stated that the boiler must be replaced, but that this will likely take a few months to sort out. The Buildings Committee will hopefully be able to bring three viable quotes to the next meeting for a PCC decision. Money has been put aside in the Buildings Fund for the purpose of purchasing a new boiler.

## **4.2 Our Buildings**

### **4.2.1 Church Rooms Development Project**

Nick Powlesland reported that the St Laud Close property is now on the market with an asking price of £490K.

The Buildings Committee have gone out to tender for the works on the church rooms. Three firms are expected to tender, although two other firms did decide to drop out from tendering. The results of the tenders should be known by the end of April, likely with the decision about which tender to accept being taken at the May PCC meeting. Jema noted the need to approach donors in the congregation whose pledges will need to be turned into actual gifts. This will take place around the time of the APCM.

The PCC thanked the Buildings Committee (Peter, Chris, Caroline, Al and Nick) for all they are continuing to do to move this project forwards.

## **5. UPDATES AND DECISIONS**

### **5.1 Living in Love and Faith update**

Jema noted that LLF stands for the title of a book "Living in Love and Faith" which had been published at the end of 2020 and which explores matters of sexuality and identity within the Church of England. She advised that this issue is still being worked through at national level so that it would be premature for us to discuss the matter now and that some guidance would probably come to the PCC later from the national church.

Simon Potter noted that the General Synod had hoped to give pastoral guidance in July, but that the issue might take until November. He reported that there had been a great deal of media attention, but that no final decisions have been taken and that Bishops are under a great of pressure with conflicting views to reconcile. One local problem may be that individual church decisions might change with changes of PCC membership.

Jema expressed her willingness to talk one-to-one around the issue of same-sex relationships with those within the church.

## **5.2 EMDL application from Simon Potter**

Simon Potter explained that his application is for a three-month sabbatical, now known formally as Extended Ministerial Development Leave. His EMDL application form for Autumn 2024 had been pre-circulated to PCC members.

Simon reported that his primary interest for the EMDL is to gain time to study the skills of preaching and oral communication generally in a church. He explained that he particularly wanted to focus on relevant material in the Book of Acts and that he wanted to produce written guidance for himself and others. His time would be divided into periods in the UK and also in France where he could borrow a friend's cottage near Taizé. Simon explained that his absence would be cost neutral for St. Mary's. Simon asked for his application to be kept confidential for the present, until it is clear whether this application has been approved by the diocese

## **5.3 Kintsugi Hope Wellbeing Groups**

Jema referred PCC members to the background given on the agenda. She explained that the PCC needed to vote on whether St Mary's could take on the need for insurance cover for the ASMA wellbeing groups. It was also raised that the new youth discipleship group called Bulb, which is taking place fortnightly on Sunday afternoons, should also be agreed by the PCC as a St Mary's activity. This led to the following proposal :-

**Proposal** The PCC approves that, for insurance and safeguarding purposes, the ASMA Wellbeing Groups and the Bulb Discipleship Group should be deemed to be St Mary's activities.

Proposed. Jo Morris.      Seconded Kate Pinfeld

Apart from two abstentions this proposal was **agreed** unanimously.

## **5.4 Potential Plans for the Coronation of King Charles III**

Jema reported that there are currently no plans for a Coronation event at St. Mary's, and that it was a complicated weekend for her due to a prior engagement away from Bristol. One member suggested that we could screen the proceedings in the church and perhaps provide a lunch. Andy Judd commented that he would be willing to explore the idea of a joint event at Trinity College between St Mary's and the 43rd Scouts. As some PCC members indicated their willingness to attend a Coronation event the following action was agreed.

**Action** Andy Judd to contact Trinity College to ask whether a Coronation event might be held in their facilities.

## 5.5 Safeguarding

Caroline Owen reminded PCC members that several of them had still to complete the safeguarding courses provided online by the Diocese (namely Basic Awareness; Safeguarding Foundations; and Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse). She noted that these courses have to be repeated every three years.

Caroline reported that St. Mary's requires PCC authorisation to impose our safeguarding rules on non-church groups which use church facilities. This includes groups like guides and brownies, dance classes, a Russian class and piano lessons. This led to the following proposal:-

**Proposal** The PCC approves that non-church groups using church facilities be required to accept our church safeguarding policy.

Proposed. Stephanie Wren.      Seconded    Al Meadows

Apart from one abstention this proposal was **agreed** unanimously.

## 6. STAFFING ADJUSTMENTS

Jema asked Caroline Jowett-Ive to chair this part of the meeting. PCC members with personal links to any church staff members either left the meeting or agreed to remain without participating in debates or voting. Details on the proposed staffing changes, had been pre-circulated to PCC members.

Caroline Jowett-Ive outlined the changes to the Youth Minister role, following Hayley's request to reduce her hours from full time to 20 hours per week. It was noted that Hayley has done important work on I.T. for the church in addition to engaging successfully with young people at St Mary's and elsewhere. The PCC formally noted its thanks to Hayley for her efforts. Caroline noted the need for more volunteer effort in terms of both Tech and youth ministry

Jema noted that there are no plans to reduce the amount of youth ministry currently offered by St Mary's, but that other aspects of Hayley's role, such as ministry in secondary schools outside the parish, will need to be curtailed. Hayley will take up a part time post with Bristol Diocese as a Mental Health Advisor and this will compensate for the reduced hours at St. Mary's. This led to the following proposal:-

**Proposal** The PCC approves the reduction in Hayley Brydges hours from full time to 20 hours per week.

Proposed. Jo Morris.      Seconded    Caroline Owen

This proposal was **agreed** unanimously.

Caroline then explained that as an employer, St. Mary's PCC is required to follow best practice in relation to employment law, in order to protect itself and our employees. She explained that (as

detailed in the paper) the office restructuring proposal is to increase the Operations Manager role from 25 to 30 hours per week, office based and to reduce the Administrator's role from 25 hours per week to 15 hours. This reduction would also require a new unpaid role for 5 hours per week for a Life Events Administrator to take up some of the work currently done by the Church Administrator. Caroline advised that Carrie Patterson had been offered but declined to accept the rescoped role of Operations Manager and had not presented any alternative suggestions. She also advised that Rachel Sandford has accepted the proposed reduced hours in her role as Church Administrator. Caroline asked the PCC members for their comments on the proposal that our current Operations Manager be offered redundancy.

It was noted that also it would be a loss to the church not having Carrie in her current role, and that given the level of pay, the Operations Manager role is a "sacrificial" one. Caroline confirmed that Churches generally are unable to offer competitive salaries compared to some other employment sectors.

When asked when the new arrangements would be implemented Caroline replied that it would be at the beginning of May, and that Stephanie Wren had come forward to take on the new voluntary Life Events Administrator role on a trial basis. Caroline explained that Carrie would receive redundancy pay which would be 1.5 weeks pay for each full year of service. Caroline called for the PCC to vote on the staffing changes and this led to the following proposals:-

**Proposal** The PCC approves the redundancy of the current Operations Manager and the increase in the hours of any new Operations Manager to 30 hours per week.

Proposed. Tony Hughes.      Seconded    Angela Cattell

Apart from 3 abstentions this proposal was **agreed** unanimously.

**Proposal** The PCC approves the reduction in the hours of the Church Administrator from 25 to 15 hours per week.

Proposed. Jo Morris.      Seconded    Hazel Trapnell

Apart from 3 abstentions this proposal was **agreed** unanimously.

Caroline then noted that formal PCC approval would be necessary for Carrie's redundancy pay which (at 1.5 weeks pay for every year of service) would be greater than the capped statutory requirement. She noted that the redundancy pay would remove any financial gain from staffing changes in the church accounts in the current year, but that any ex gratia payments can be made tax free. An ex gratia gift was proposed and this led to the following proposal :-

**Proposal** The PCC approves the level of redundancy pay for the Operations Manager to be set at 1.5 times the weekly salary for each year of service (6 in total) plus any outstanding holiday pay, plus an ex-gratia gift of £500.

Proposed. Brian Richardson.      Seconded    Caroline Owen

Apart from 1 abstention, this proposal was **agreed** unanimously.

Jema announced that she and Caroline Jowett-Ive would have the necessary conversations with staff members, and that this information should be kept confidential until it is shared with the church family. The PCC formally noted its gratitude to Carrie for all she has done.

**7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Jema noted that no AOB had been raised

**8. CLOSING PRAYER**

Jema asked Jo Morris to close the meeting with prayer as this would be her last PCC meeting with St Mary’s.

Signed.....

Date .....

**Abbreviations**

- ASMA Avonside Mission Area
- EDML Extended Ministerial Development Leave
- PCC Parochial Church Council
- DBS Disclosure and Barring Service

**The dates for 2023 PCC meetings will be:**

- Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> May
- Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> July
- Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> September
- Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> November

These dates are the usual second Wednesday of the month.

The date for the APCM is after a 10am service on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> May.