



# St Michael and All Angels, Ledbury

## Minutes of Standing Committee – 29 February 2024

**Present:** Keith Hilton-Turvey (Rector)  
Catherine Beech (Churchwarden)  
David Houghton (Churchwarden)  
Andrew Beech  
Stephen Cheetham

**792.** The meeting opened with Psalm 71 and prayer.

### Minutes of the meeting on 28 December 2023

**793.** These had been agreed and signed at the PCC meeting on 20 January.

### APCM

**794.** The churchwardens were aiming to ensure that the APCM was conducted in a seemly manner, with (should any be put forward) any resolutions clearly drafted and calmly discussed. Should any contentious issues involving the Rector be raised, Keith Hilton-Turvey has agreed that David Houghton, as PCC Vice-Chair, would chair that part of the meeting.

**Action: (As appropriate) Keith Hilton-Turvey/David Houghton**

### Vision

**795.** Ann Scull and Georgina Hicks are enhancing the church's prayer life by setting up four lunchtime meditations in Holy Week. A follow-up meeting the following week will consider permanent additions to the church's prayer life.

**796.** Christine Walters has written a paper proposing a monthly Sunday afternoon service in St Katherine's chapel aimed at families. The PCC will consider this at its March meeting.

**797.** Keith Hilton-Turvey, Michael Gallagher and Bill McKenzie are working on an outline for a forthcoming preaching series.

**Action: Keith Hilton-Turvey**

### Policies and procedures

**798.** The churchwardens will consider whether changes need to be made to the existing policies and procedures, for them to be adopted by the incoming PCC in May. Cath Beech and Maria Dineen will seek to produce an overall church risk assessment. Stephen Cheetham will consider amending the delegated authority rules, to determine within how long a period a committee may spend up to its full delegated authority. It was suggested that this might be the interval between two PCC meetings.

**Action: Churchwardens/Stephen Cheetham**

## **Communications**

**799.** Keith Hilton-Turvey and Stephen Cheetham had still to meet Sarah Whitelock (Diocesan Director of Communications) to consider how the church might improve its social media presence. Stephen will also liaise with David Houghton to seek to resolve the technical difficulties that do not currently allow both churchwardens to access the [churchwardens@stmichaelsledbury.org](mailto:churchwardens@stmichaelsledbury.org) email address. It was agreed that general enquiries should go to the rector and churchwardens for the most appropriate one of them to answer.

**Action: Keith Hilton-Turvey/Stephen Cheetham**

## **Prayers of Love and Faith**

**800.** Keith Hilton-Turvey reported an inconclusive discussion on this subject at Synod. In the absence of anything to report this will not feature on the agenda of the March PCC meeting.

## **Worship Review and Development Group (WRDG)**

**801.** With the closure of the Local Ministry Development Group it was agreed that the WRDG should be set new terms of reference and that it should report henceforth direct to the PCC. To the March PCC meeting.

**Action: Cath Beech (to finalise document for the PCC)**

## **Finance**

**802.** The draft budget for 2024 was agreed, subject to it being aligned with the Maintenance Schedule drawn up by Ian James for the Fabric Sub-Committee.

**Action: Stephen Cheetham**

**803.** Andrew Beech will discuss with Tim Keyes ways to finance the repointing of the spire. Some £30,000 remains in the bell fund, and it was thought that this might be used for this purpose.

**Action: Andrew Beech**

**804.** Stephen Cheetham expressed strong reservations about the decision of the PCC at its January meeting to maintain its policy on charitable giving. To maintain giving at this rate would result in a deficit budget being set, which was not allowed under charity law. He reminded committee members that all charity trustees have a duty of prudence, and asked

that the March PCC being presented with the issues, and asked to amend the January decision. As part of this discussion PCC Members will have drawn to their attention that discretionary spending falls into two categories: support for the diocese through Parish Share, and giving to external charities. He favoured maintaining the former (and ideally increasing it), and reducing the latter so long as church income remains low.

**805.** It was agreed that the following options would be put to the PCC in March:

- Re-designate existing reserves for charitable purposes. We have £6k identified for Alpha evangelism which appears no longer to be required and could be transferred to the General Fund, with the aim of funding charitable donations. In addition we are holding £2k for LEAF, which we could remit to them and include in our charitable total. However, neither of these items represent an ongoing solution to the issue;
- Accept that our existing charitable giving policy – like our reserves policy – represents an aspirational goal and needs to be modified from time to time according to our financial resources. This would give discretion to the Treasurer, with PCC approval, to reduce donations in any given year so as to ensure that the positive balance is maintained in the General Fund, and part of any surplus is used to rebuild our reserve;
- Modify the policy and determine charitable donations as a percentage – e.g. 50% of any surplus in the General Fund for a given year, rather than as a percentage of overall giving.

**Action: Stephen Cheetham**

**806.** Stephen Cheetham proposed that an account be opened with BlackRock, who had a good track record of managing investments, to manage the church's investments. This was agreed.

**807.** It was also agreed that members of the congregation needed to be encouraged to give more. Income had flatlined and not kept up with inflation. This had, in the past, been done by the Stewardship Secretary. Keith Hilton-Turvey will speak to Ayo Adewale to discuss methods of encouraging higher levels of giving.

**Action: Keith Hilton-Turvey**

### **Proposed terrorism legislation**

**808.** It was noted that the Government was consulting about the so-called Martyn's Law, drawn up following the Manchester Arena bombing in 2017. It would require those responsible for premises holding "events" open to the public (which would include worship in churches) to consider the terrorist risk and how they would respond to an attack. At present the proposals do not appear too burdensome, but it was agreed that an eye would be kept on the proposals as they develop.

### **Fabric**

Permanent heating solution

**809.** The Fabric Sub-Committee had met a heating adviser, and awaited his proposals.

**Action: Andrew Beech**

#### Roof valley repairs

**810.** It had been agreed that this work would wait until the better weather (hopefully) in Spring 2024. A grant for this work had been sought from the diocese.

#### Upper rooms

**811.** Plans for this work had been received from Caroe and Partners. A structural engineer had visited to assess the floor loading of the upper rooms. It was hoped that costings for a lift, for the improvement of the spiral staircase and the refurbishment of the upper rooms would be available soon. It was noted that the Friends had expressed interest in part-funding this work.

#### Pews

**812.** The DAC had sought confirmation that the proposed casters would not damage the floor. This will be dealt with by the Fabric Sub-Committee.

**Action: David Houghton**

#### Trinity altar

**813.** The faculty for the transfer of the altar to Sussex had been granted, but was subject to the Hereford diocesan registrar receiving the paperwork from Sussex. This was awaited.

#### Catering Unit

**814.** A further meeting had been held and agreement reached on the minimum to be provided in any new catering unit. It was hoped that three quotes could now be obtained for the unit, which would give the church a better idea of overall cost. It looked as though it would not be possible to provide cooking facilities because of the legal requirement that this be externally vented.

**Action: Fabric Sub-Committee**

#### **Church silver**

**815.** No action to report.

**Action: David Houghton/Andrew Beech**

#### **Safeguarding**

**816.** Nothing to report.

#### **Date of next meeting**

**817.** The next meeting will be at 7.30pm on 7 May at The Croft, Woodleigh Road. Please note the change of date.

The meeting closed at 9.20 pm with prayer.