



St Michael and All Angels, Ledbury

Minutes of Parochial Church Council - 17 November 2021

Present: Keith Hilton-Turvey (Chair)
David Houghton (Churchwarden)
Andrew Beech
Cath Beech
Benjamin Hilton-Turvey
William Hopkinson
Ian James
Lisa-Jayne Lewis
Christabel Panter
Sue Cooper
Peter Scull
William Simmonds
Diana Veasey
Peter Veasey
Abby Wake
Will Wake

Apologies: Tim Keyes, James Smith

853. Keith Hilton-Turvey opening the meeting with Revelation 11:15-19 and prayer. Maureen Browning had been diagnosed with terminal cancer, and the meeting prayed for her.

854. Keith Hilton-Turvey announced that Julian l'Anson had resigned as churchwarden. His resignation had been accepted by the bishop, with sadness. Andrew Beech pointed out that the notice period was two months, so it would not be possible to elect a replacement until December. *Pro tem* Christine Bainton will help out with some churchwarden's duties.

Minutes of meeting on 20 October

855. These were agreed unanimously, subject to the correction of one typo.

Minutes of the Standing Committee on 1 November

856. These were agreed unanimously, subject to the correction of one typo.

Safeguarding

857. Keith Hilton-Turvey is waiting to hear from Mandy McPhee (Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser) about who should hold records of training completed. There were no other issues to report.

Finance

858. Cath Beech introduced the finance report. The church is forecast to be running a budget deficit of some £13,000 in 2022. Cath had noticed a decrease in regular giving, and that the church was becoming more dependent on other sources. Andrew Beech reported that the church's gas supplier had ceased trading. A new supplier had been allocated by Ofgem, but the cost of gas was likely to rise immediately.

859. Cath introduced the budget for the General Fund for 2022. Forecast income was more of an educated guess. The budget included costs of running the church office. It was hoped that more income could be generated from the use of the building, and from other income coming into the office. Cath proposed the draft budget, seconded by Ian James. This was agreed unanimously. As regards the maintenance budget, the cost of maintenance was hard to determine in advance of receipt of the Quinquennial Report and will be considered later.

860. Cath proposed, seconded by Christabel Panter, that the Parish Share be set at the previously agreed reduced figure of £60,400, subject to review in six months. This was agreed with one abstention.

861. It had been proposed that the charitable giving allocated in response to congregational suggestions should be given to Ledbury Refugee Centre. The Centre, however, did not meet the set conditions, having no corporate structure or identity. Cath Beech proposed, seconded by Christabel Panter, that the 2021 recipients should be Ledbury Children's Centre and Tayini in addition to those agreed in 2020. It was further proposed that the £439 allocated in 2019 towards the youth drop-in centre, but not sent because of their closure, should be given to LEAF once established in new premises. This was agreed unanimously.

862. Cath Beech reported that one person was considering taking on the role of Stewardship Secretary.

Worship

863. There will be no change in the arrangements for worship, including communion, until the diocese agrees further relaxations. A paper pew sheet is in preparation, initially for special services.

864. Complaints had been received about services, sermons and intercessions being too long. For the most part it was felt that the former was not the case, most services lasting 60-75 minutes. Sue Cooper felt that people were being put off by long sermons and that intercessions should be limited to just that and not include praise and thanksgiving. Diana Veasey asked whether the intercessions could be given without being shown on screen to allow changes to be made to reflect recent events. It was felt that many people appreciated seeing them on screen so this was not agreed.

Vestments and altar linen

865. Ian James spoke to his paper on the subject. Examination had shown that the vestments and linens were generally in good condition. A number of Council members pressed for greater use of the vestments available, on appropriate occasions. Keith Hilton-Turvey pointed out that it is for the incumbent and not the PCC to determine which vestments are worn. William Hopkinson mentioned that Canon Law requires the PCC to be consulted when a change to the standard form of dress for the Eucharist is proposed, that this does not appear to have happened and should¹.

866. Lisa-Jayne Lewis pointed out that the altar covers need replacing. Diana Veasey suggested using some material that had been left to the church some time ago for banners or any other purpose for which it might be useful. Ian James proposed, seconded by Sue Cooper, that the Standing Committee action the need for renewal and subsequent laundering of the relevant plain altar covers and advise on an acceptable colour for the same. This was agreed with one abstention.

Action: Standing Committee

867. Ian James proposed, seconded by Sue Cooper, that the secretary conveys the PCC's gratitude to Bob Hale and Elaine Toyer for their service to the church, in attending to changes of the altar frontals throughout the year. This was agreed unanimously. David Houghton pointed out that he has thanked them for their work within the past month.

Action: Andrew Beech

868. Ian James proposed, seconded by William Hopkinson, that the PCC would appreciate the wearing of chasubles by the officiating clergy for more of the eucharistic services, in particular for the main service on church festival days (e.g Palm Sunday, Easter, Pentecost, Advent and Christmas Day), and such other occasions as may be appropriate. It would also be appreciated if copes could be worn at the occasional (non-eucharist) civic and church festival service. This was agreed with seven in favour, one against and six abstentions.

Action: Keith Hilton-Turvey

Church office

869. David Houghton reported that the support mechanism for Sarah Williams was up and running, as was the monthly review programme. Cath Beech is looking at recovering the cost of work done (e.g. photographing and printing) for bodies such as the Hop Churches and St Katherine's.

Use of emails within the church

¹ Canon B8 states: "2. Notwithstanding the provisions of this Canon no minister shall change the form of vesture in use in the church or chapel in which he officiates unless he has ascertained by consultation with the parochial church council that such changes will be acceptable: Provided always that in case of disagreement the minister shall refer the matter to the bishop of the diocese, whose direction shall be obeyed."

870. On behalf of the Communications Group William Hopkinson presented an aide memoire on the use of emails (see Annex A). He explained that this was a matter of common sense and judgement; that people ought not to write anything in an email that they wouldn't be prepared to say to the recipient's face. Ian James proposed, seconded by David Houghton, that the PCC endorse the document. This was agreed unanimously.

Magazine

871. On behalf of the Communications Group William Hopkinson presented a document proposing detailed rules on the supervision of the magazine. In discussion it became clear that a majority of Council members felt that the paper contained too much of the history of the issue and that the proposals themselves were too detailed and too prescriptive, and hence too onerous. The document was remitted back to the Communications Group with the request that a revised paper be submitted to the PCC following the same general principles but which was shorter, simpler, accessible, generic in nature and that offered encouragement and assistance to the current and any future editor of the magazine. Given that currently the church is putting out nothing to the wider community other than what is posted on the website the need for urgency was stressed. This was agreed with three abstentions.

Action: Communications Group

Other communications issues

872. Andrew Beech will circulate a paper on the state of implementation of previously agreed recommendations in the next week.

Action: Andrew Beech

873. Keith Hilton-Turvey will action the introduction of email addresses for church officers once the current technical issues are resolved.

Action: Keith Hilton-Turvey

Baptism

874. Diana Veasey reported that the recent baptism had gone well. She sought feedback from Council members on an interim paper from the Baptism Group.

Action: All PCC Members

Reordering

875. Three more experts from the Major Churches Panel are to visit the church on 2 December.

St Katherine's

876. David Houghton reported a useful meeting with Chris Milton and Alan Cartwright (representing the Almshouse trustees). The team were now working on Heads of Terms of a new lease.

Action: *David Houghton/Ian James/Cath Beech*

Fabric

877. Andrew Beech reported that the quinquennial report was expected in mid-December. No proposal had yet been received from Caroe's about repair of the broken stones in the south aisle. Ian Cramp had inspected the Chapter House, and would make a proposal for relighting it. Some interim improvements had been made to the existing lighting, but unfortunately the flood light that would light the ceiling was beyond repair.

Chair of LMDG

878. No progress to report.

Matters Arising

879. a) Work on the Promoting Safer Churches Plan is in progress;

b) Work was under way to dispose of items from the room above the north porch. William Hopkinson was thanked for taking a carpet and the table tennis table;

c) A meeting will be held on 22 November to finalise the details of the audio-visual equipment including the drop-down screen. A number of possible grant sources had been identified.

Other business

880. Christabel Panter wished to step down as one of the trustees of the Ledbury Foodbank nominated by the PCC. Keith Hilton-Turvey proposed that Sue Simpson be appointed in her place. This was agreed with two abstentions.

881. The next meeting will be held on 17 January 2022 at 7.30 p.m. in the Chapter House.

The meeting closed at 21.36 with prayer and the grace.

A.1 PCC minute 827 remitted back to CORE further consideration of its recommendations B.5 and B.6, inter alia, on the tone of church business emails. The Annex to this note sets out what we recommend should be covered by the policy and suggests what the latter should be. It sets out in bullet form the policy that CORE recommend for emails and in due course other forms of communication. The PCC is invited to agree them and to arrange for their dissemination and propagation throughout parish structures and bodies and more widely in the congregation and on the website.

A.2 Why use email?

The objective is the efficient discharge of church business. To that end:

- They must always be polite and truthful;
- They are a very good facilitator of swift and effective communication;
- They can help to produce an evidence trail that can be easily traced; and
- They can form a useful point of reference and establish facts before oral discussion.
- They are useful for:
 - Passing on information
 - Gathering information
 - Asking for and sharing ideas
 - Planning
 - Passing on useful links for further research
 - Preliminary discussion of complex issues - to identify the core problems

Emails should not be used for:

- Personal Criticism;
- Abuse of individuals;
- Abuse of particular religious or ethical opinion;
- Negative comment about a person making proposals, even if commentary on those is robust.

Before you send your email:

Email recipients do not have the personal facial and body-language pointers that in-person communications provide. Thus an email that was not intended to be unfriendly may come across that way. Senders of emails are therefore recommended to pause before sending; read through the email once or twice to gauge whether it may be read differently from how it was intended. This is especially the case if the email needs to express criticism. If in doubt amend.

A.3 To whom should I copy my email?

Copying emails is a particularly difficult area for which to prescribe absolute rules. Keeping people in the picture on what is happening is necessary and good; the Church is not a secret society. A good general principle is that you should send your email to all those who need to know about a particular topic, and especially those from whom you are seeking a response. Also ensure that you send it to anyone who's interests may (however tangentially) be affected by what you are saying or proposing. That is particularly important when developing policies or actions that may affect others with particular responsibilities. You will need to think about who these are before sending your email.

A.4 To whom should I not copy my email?

A good principle is not to add unnecessarily to anyone's inbox. We all get more emails than we would like, and especially emails in which we have no real interest. So:

- Do not copy to anyone who does not have a reasonable need to be put in the picture;
- Do not copy emails in order to show off!
- Do not copy emails containing personal criticism.
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A.5 Blind copies

Church data protection policy is to copy emails around using blind copies (bcc). This protects recipients from being open to hacking themselves if one of the other recipients is hacked. Bcc is especially useful to avoid shoals of comments amongst a wide circle of recipients only peripherally involved.

However CORE recommend senders to think very carefully about using Bcc. Whilst it may be necessary to protect privacy or recipients from hacking, it can be an impediment to business where a number of people are being consulted, as they will not necessarily know who are the others with an interest.

A.6 Timing your response to emails

Replying speedily and constructively to emails received is very important, for courtesy and effective prosecution of business.

- If delay cannot be avoided, at least acknowledge
- Do not respond to an email received by writing to someone else without informing the originator what you have done.

A.7 These guidelines will be disseminated via

- Churchwide email
- Being published on the website
- Given to PCC members and group leaders.

A.8 Any case of difficulty that cannot be resolved by recourse to the originator, the Rector or a Churchwarden should be referred to the Archdeacon.

A.9 These guidelines will be reviewed regularly, and at least every 24 months.