



The Parish Church of St George, Jesmond

Parochial Church Council

Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 2 August 2023

at 7.30 pm in the Choir Vestry of St George's Church

Present: Joan Grenfell, Mike de la Hunt, Lana Liu, Ian Ness, Mike Ranson (Treasurer), Nigel Russell-Sewell (Secretary), Alex Walker, Janet Wilson (Chair).

Apologies: Hilary Cullingford, The Reverend Ollie Dempsey, Donald Gaze, Izzy McDonald-Booth, Enid Pearson, Kay Plumley, Margaret Vane.

Absent: Sue Vernon

In attendance: The Reverend Dr Pauline Pearson (The Area Dean) from 8.20 pm

1. Joan Grenfell opened the meeting with prayer.
2. All were welcomed by the Chair, who explained that the Area Dean would be joining the meeting from 8.30 pm to discuss changes to the Parish Profile requirements.
3. Apologies were noted.
- 4. Declaration of Interests**
 - 4.1 No conflicts of interest were declared.
- 5. Minutes of the Meeting held on 4 July 2023, approval and Matters Arising**
 - 5.1 The minutes of the PCC Meeting held on 4 July 2023 [Paper 2308-A] were approved following a correction to the Action Log: 23-07(7.3) was completed during the meeting. Proposed: Joan Grenfell; Seconded: Ian Ness. The Secretary was thanked for the professional standard of the minutes.

5.2 The Action log was reviewed:

23-05 (2): The Net Zero report has been received and appended to the papers for this meeting. There will be a consultation with the congregation, following which recommendations will be made to a future PCC.

ACTION: Kay Plumley

23-07 (6.12) The draft Deanery plan had been circulated by email. A short discussion was had on the changing nature of the role of lay leaders within the church.

23-07 (10.2) Derek Nicholson was informed about the decision regarding tree works and has taken appropriate action.

23-07 (14.1) Mrs Peacock has been informed of the decision regarding the Friends.

Other items remain on the action log appended to these Minutes. There are no items of concern.

6. Standing item: Safeguarding

6.1 All PCC members were advised to keep their own records of course completions and communications with officials regarding safeguarding training.

6.2 No further matters had been submitted by the Safeguarding Officer who was not present at the meeting.

7. Standing item: Finance

7.1 The Treasurer presented his paper, drawing attention to the following points:

- We are behind in claiming Gift Aid and this needs to be brought up to date;
- Parochial Fees were collected and banked by the Vicar: there is a backlog since the end of June but Jonathan is being asked to look after these;
- Expecting Parochial Fees to be smaller this year than last;
- Utilities costs are extremely high, and we are doing what we can to keep these as low as possible;
- The money used for the sound system will show on this year's accounts;
- The Church Hall income is not keeping up with costs, especially given the increases in utilities. Hall costs need to be reviewed;

ACTION: The Chair and Margaret Vane to prepare a paper for September

- There are savings against the Vicarage (~£5,000 per annum) whilst in interregnum;
- We must be careful to ensure the Catherine Cookson Trust funding is used specifically for designated purposes in relation to the fabric of the building;
- £15,000 sits in the Community Hub; £16,000 is in the organ fund;

- Thank-you letters are sent to donors and pledgers, previously signed by Brian Hurst. The Hub Steering Group is asked to consider if this is deemed sufficient; for example, donors to the organ fund receive certificates.

ACTION: Hub Steering Group

7.2 The new signatories are in place at the bank. Approval sought to remove old signatories, which was approved unanimously.

ACTION: The Treasurer

7.3 The treasurer had explored corporate credit cards so trustees aren't using out of pocket expenses, but this is not possible given the bank minimum amounts are significantly higher.

7.4 Trustee expenses will be declared in the accounts every quarter, as a declaration of interest.

7.5 The Chair asked how Hub accounts are shown? The Treasurer noted that these are in a restricted fund and therefore shown separately in the accounts.

8. Standing item: St George's Community Hub 2025

8.1 The Chair reported that a meeting was held last week and notes will be circulated by once approved. An application has been submitted to the Sir James Knott Trust for £45,000; the application will be considered at a meeting in November.

8.2 External members of the Steering Group are being sought to ensure community representation.

8.3 The Steering Group will be supporting events at St George's for Heritage Open Days on 8-9 September.

8.4 PCC Members' attention was drawn to events in the coming months.

9. Churchwarden updates

9.1 The Chair reported that repairs are still ongoing following the lightning strike repairs, which unfortunately includes damage to the newly installed sound system, the loop and the live stream camera; an insurance claim is being pursued. The quality of the lightning conductor is also being verified.

10. Standing Committee terms of reference

10.1 The terms of reference for the Standing Committee were received and approved. Proposed: Alex Walker; Seconded: Mike de la Hunt.

11. Songs of Praise

11.1 The Chair noted that *BBC Songs of Praise* is being recorded at St George’s on 21 August. The production company hopes the pews will be full. Concern was expressed by the Area Dean that the advertised three hours was a long time without a break as this was putting people off attending. The Chair will enquire if there will be an interval.

ACTION: The Chair to contact the producer and inform Area Dean.

12. Any other business

12.1 Alex Walker attended a baptism at a Baptist church where everyone brought a dish of food and wondered if there was something that could be organised here.

ACTION: Alex Walker to speak to the Chair about the Hospitality Group.

13. Dates of future meetings

13.1 It was noted that in addition to the dates on the agenda paper, St George’s PCC will also meet on Wednesday 8 November 2023.

14. Parish Profile

14.1 The Chair set the context: the Archdeacon met St Hilda’s PCC last week at which the draft text of the Parish Profile was presented. They were informed that the Bishop now has a new process in place and that each parish must prepare a “statement”, to a prescribed template, to be reviewed at the Section 11 meeting, then an illustrated “brochure” for the benefice, to be reviewed by the Bishop along with any other paperwork at the Section 12 meeting. Given neither St Hilda’s nor St George’s were aware of the changes, an enquiry was made by the PCC Secretary. The Archdeacon apologised for not informing the PCCs, noting that none of the work we’ve already done will be wasted, and that the Benefice of St George and St Hilda will be “pioneering” the Bishop’s new approach to filling a vacancy in the diocese! The Area Dean, who was not aware of the changes when we last met, has kindly found time to attend this evening to help guide us through the new process.

14.2 The Area Dean explained the new form, appended below, is very detailed but what we’ve already gathered will cover most of the responses. Some detail is more specific: actual numbers rather than averages over the last few years. Looking at the questionnaire:

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|------------|---|
| Section I | This is straightforward. |
| Section II | Not all questions are appropriate; the focus here is who we engage with, eg local businesses, or have an impact on the church with neighbourhood initiatives. |

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|-------------------|---|
| Section III | There are issues with 1(b) and a general statement on the profile of the congregation might be the best approach; Section 9 isn't up-to-date for our diocese and we should interpret appropriately (eg, (a) – (b) £90,000). |
| Section IV | Include housing and memorial garden. |
| Section V | This draws on church activities discussed in the previous Parish Profile. 1(b) could be “see 1(a)”. 1(c) includes study groups, preaching series etc that help people move along their journey of faith; 1(d) what opportunities are there to grow leadership eg Sunday School, supporting hospitality, nurturing vocations; 2(a) overseas links in past, Christian Aid; 4 – “none”; 5(a) Little Saints; 6 Anna Chaplain, café; 8 – the 18-30 group; <i>Songs of Praise</i> . |
| Section VI | This is straightforward. |
| Section VII | We do not have a Church school. |
| Section VIII | This is about work in the church to educate people eg study groups, the choirs, bell ringers, Smarties, 18-30 group; 3(a) narrative on inspirational lay members of the community – who “shine with enthusiasm about their faith”. |
| Section IX | Areas we want to develop and prioritise discussed in previous meeting (see minutes of 04 July meeting). |
| Sections X and XI | The importance of music at St George's. Stress importance of being an inclusive church and that we want to maintain that. See Question 13 on old Parish Profile. |

14.3 The Area Dean noted that Ripon and Leeds Diocese use a ‘statement and brochure’ approach for vacancies. For example, which includes the statement detail towards the end: Lower Teesdale (<https://tinyurl.com/muzmb9ka>).

14.4 The ‘statement’ document is for the Bishop and is not shared with applicants. The ‘brochure’ is applicant-facing. The questions at the end of the Parish Profile document will help in putting the brochure together:

- Is the profile positive and upbeat?
- Does it paint a good, rounded picture of the church and parish?
- Have you included quotes and photos to give it a human feel?
- Is the profile truthful and realistic?
- Have you made the job of vicar sound challenging and rewarding?
- Have you described yourselves as positive about change?
- Have you been realistic about the church buildings?
- Have you been realistic about the skills and qualities you expect from your next vicar?

- Have you been clear about the challenges s/he can expect to face in your parish?
- Have you been honest about the kind of support s/he can expect?

ACTION: The Chair and Secretary to prepare first draft of the Statement and identify any gaps for September PCC.

- 14.5 The Area Dean and Chair briefed the PCC on a currently confidential plan the Archdeacon was exploring to support the benefice in the interregnum.
15. Joan Grenfell closed the meeting at 9.45 pm with a prayer and The Grace.

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

- Monday 4 September 2023 – St George’s PCC
- Tuesday 3 October 2023 – St George’s PCC
- Monday 23 October 2023 – Section 11 Meeting with Archdeacon
- Wednesday 8 November 2023 – St George’s PCC
- Wednesday 29 November 2023 – Section 12 Meeting with +Newcastle
- Monday 4 December 2023 – St George’s PCC

All meetings will begin at 7.30 pm. Venues will be notified. The Section 11 and Section 12 meetings have been confirmed.

ACTION LOG

| Meeting | Item | Action | Status |
|---------|------|--|--------|
| 23-05 | 8 | Nigel Russell-Sewell and Alex Walker to review Social Media Policy | |
| 23-07 | 11.1 | Sue Vernon to update PCC Secretary of training records, in confidence | |
| 23-08 | 5.2 | Kay Plumley to make recommendation(s) to the PCC regarding the Net Zero report following consultation with the congregation. | |
| 23-08 | 7.1 | The Chair and Margaret Vane to prepare a hall costs review paper for September. | |
| 23-08 | 7.1 | The Chair to discuss with the Hub Steering Group means to acknowledge donations to the Community Hub. | |
| 23-08 | 7.2 | The Treasurer to remove old signatories from the account(s) at the bank. | |
| 23-08 | 11.1 | The Chair to contact <i>Songs of Praise</i> producer re interval. | |
| 23-08 | 12.1 | Alex Walker to speak to Chair about Hospitality Group. | |
| 23-08 | 14.4 | The Chair and Secretary to prepare first draft of Parish Statement for September PCC. | |

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| | New action |
| | Completed |
| | Not yet completed (up to 4 months) |
| | Not yet completed (over 4 months) |

APPENDIX

DIOCESE OF NEWCASTLE

PATRONAGE (BENEFICES) MEASURE 1986

Statement prepared by the P.C.C. describing the Church's ministry and mission within the parish

This form is designed to give an overview of a parish to be used in a vacancy for the appointment of a new parish priest. It will be accepted as the 'statement describing the conditions, needs and traditions of the parish' required by the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986. Additional information may be given by way of printed documents or written submissions.

I. Parish Information

1. *Name of Parish:*
2. *Name of Parish church(es)*
3. *Name of other C of E churches/centres for public worship in the parish*
4. *Group of parishes in which you work (formally or informally):*
5. *Deanery:*
6. *Population:*

7.(a) *Number on Electoral Roll*

(b) *Date of APCM at which this number was declared:*

7. *Attendance at worship at each church:*

Average Sunday Communicants

Average Sunday attendance

Average weekday Communicants

Average weekday attendance

8. *Occasional Offices:*

Number of baptisms in the last 12 months:

Number of persons confirmed in the last 12 months:

Number of weddings in the last 12 months:

Number of funerals in church in the last 12 months:

Number of funerals taken by clergy not in church in the last 12 months:

II. The Local Community

1.(a) *Briefly describe the population in terms of any predominant age and/or social groups, the ethnic mix etc:*

(b) *Are there any special social problems, e.g. high unemployment?*

2. *Please list:*

Local schools:

Youth centres:

Hospitals:

Nursing/residential homes, sheltered housing:

Places of worship of other faiths:

Local businesses:

Neighbourhood initiatives:

Local associations:

Any civic responsibilities of local clergy:

III. The Church Community (please give details for each church)

1.(a) *What percentage of the congregation lives outside the parish?*

(b) *Describe the congregation in terms of age, employment, culture, ethnicity and gender:*

2. *Please describe the tradition of your church and give details of robes/vestments worn by officiants:*

3. *Give details of Sunday services with times and form of service used:*

4. *Give details of weekday services:*

5. *List any authorised ministers (e.g. Reader, Church Army Officer, Ordained Local Minister, Non-stipendiary Minister, Curate in training, retired Clergy):*

6.(a) *What is the average weekly giving of those aged 16 years and older, and what proportion of the giving is gift aided:*

(b) *When did the parish last have a stewardship campaign:*

7. *How does each church supplement direct giving in order to meet financial needs (eg fundraising events, hall lettings, occasional offices, investments):*

8.(a) *Give details of expenses paid to the incumbent, and state whether this covers them in full.*

(b) *Is there an annual discussion about the level of expenses as part of the budgeting process:*

9. *What amount of Share has been (a) requested and (b) paid:*

Last year:

Current year:

Next year:

10.(a) *Is there any capital project in hand at the moment:*

10.(b) *If so, please give brief details with costs and state how they are to be met:*

11. *Please attach a copy of the latest statement of accounts.*

IV. Church Buildings (please give details for each church)

- 1.(a) *What is the general state of repair of the churches:*
- (b) *Please give details of any major maintenance needed following the last Quinquennial Inspection:*
2. *Please give details of church halls and any other ancillary buildings (and an indication of the level of their use).*
3. *Is there a churchyard to maintain and who is responsible for its maintenance?*

V. Outreach and Mission

- 1.(a) *What are the regular mission and outreach activities of the parish:*
- (b) *What are you doing to help people find out about Jesus:*
- (c) *What are you doing to help grow people in discipleship:*
- (d) *What are you doing to grow people in leadership:*
- 2.(a) *Please give details of support for the church overseas:*
- (b) *How much is given annually:*
- 3.(a) *Give details of support for home missions and charities:*
- (b) *How much is given annually:*
- 4.(a) *Does the parish have an overseas link:*
- (b) *If so, please state where/who*
- 5.(a) *Is there an organised system of outreach and welcome to new families:*
- (b) *If so, please describe:*
6. *What part does the church play in community care:*
- 7.(a) *Are there Lay Eucharistic Assistants who take communion to the sick:*
- (b) *If so, who are they:*
8. *What work does the church undertake with young people, other than in church based organisations (eg open youth work):*

VI. Ecumenical Relationships

- 1(a) *Involvement in local Council of Churches*

- (b) *Is there a formal covenant with any other denomination?*
2. *What informal ecumenical contacts are there?*

VII. Church Education and Social Provision

- 1.(a) *Name of Church School(s), if applicable:*
- (b) *Aided?
Controlled?
Foundation?*
- (c) *Number of pupils on roll (approx.):*
- (d) *If aided, does the PCC support the school:*

VIII. Lay Education and Participation

1. *What education and training work takes place in the church for the following (give approx. numbers):*
- Children:*
Young People:
Adults:
- 2.(a) *Give details of house/prayer groups:*
- (b) *Are the leaders clergy or lay:*
- 3.(a) *How do you rate the strength of lay leadership:*
- (b) *To what do you credit this strength or the lack of it:*

IX. Mission

1. *List areas of church life which you consider in need of development:*
2. *What are the main areas of mission that you think the new priest should prioritise in their ministry:*
3. *In summary, what are the top three challenges with which you and the new priest need to engage:*

X. Additional Information

Please add here, or on another sheet, anything else which you would like the Patron and the Bishop to know about the conditions, needs and traditions of the parish.

XI. The new parish priest

List the qualities and skills you would like to see the new priest: