



The Parish Church of St George, Jesmond

Parochial Church Council

## **Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 8 November 2023**

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

Present: Joan Grenfell, Mike de la Hunt, Lana Liu, The Reverend Canon Clare MacLaren, Ian Ness, Enid Pearson, Kay Plumley, Mike Ranson (Treasurer), Nigel Russell-Sewell (Secretary), Janet Wilson (Chair), Margaret Vane, Sue Vernon (Safeguarding Officer).

Apologies: Hilary Cullingford, Donald Gaze, Izzy McDonald-Booth, Alex Walker.

In attendance: Jon Davies (observer)

1. The Reverend Canon Clare MacLaren opened the meeting with prayer.
2. All were welcomed by the Chair.
3. Apologies were noted.
- 4. Declaration of Interests**
  - 4.1 No conflicts of interest were declared.
- 5. Minutes of the Meeting held on 3 October 2023 and approval**
  - 5.1 The minutes of the PCC Meeting held on 3 October were approved. Proposed: Enid Pearson, seconded: Kay Plumley.

- 5.2 Item 2310-7.6, proposed: up to £2,500 be paid to charities this year. No response from Charitable Giving Group had been received by the Chair on the proposal to support Jesmond Residents Association towards the Jesmond Festival. A further proposal was made to continue supporting USPG. Reported that we give to seven or eight charities. The Charitable Giving Group will be convened in the next few days. PCC approved up to £2,500 be given to charities this year. The Chair will circulate a list of charities to PCC members.

**ACTIONS: Chair**

- 5.3 The Action Log was noted.

## **6. Standing item: Safeguarding**

- 6.1 No items from the Safeguarding Officer.
- 6.2 The Chair had circulated the Safeguarding Action Plan. The Churchwardens will discuss the paper with the Safeguarding Officer and this will return as a substantive item at the next meeting.

**ACTIONS: Churchwardens and Safeguarding Officer**

## **7. Standing item: Finance**

- 7.1 A paper had been circulated regarding hall bookings. Proposed: £23 per hour for main hall, £12 per hour for smaller rooms, £10 per hour for kitchen or £5 for half-hour rate. Whole day rate £640. Proposed: Lana Liu, seconded: Sue Vernon. The new rates will apply from end November.

**ACTION: Chair to inform Parish Administrator**

- 7.2 Reported: a system has been put in place to ensure invoices are paid. The Parish Administrator is chasing unpaid invoices and will continue to track payments.
- 7.3 The Treasurer suggested “Hall Master” ([www.hallmaster.co.uk](http://www.hallmaster.co.uk)) software that may help keep track of bookings and raise invoices. The cost is £12 per month. PCC approved exploring this option.

**ACTION: Treasurer to speak to Parish Administrator**

- 7.4 The PCC formally recorded its thanks to the Parish Administrator, Jonathan, for all his work in collecting payments and ensuring records are kept up-to-date.

## **8. Standing item: Buildings and Grounds Group**

- 8.1 A paper had been circulated about the lighting by the Chair. There are issues with the spotlights in the chancel. An offer had been made to access the light fittings by ladder. The PCC thanked the offer-maker, however, this was politely declined due to health and safety concerns.

- 8.2 Proposed: to invite an electrical contractor to quote for carrying out repairs at height, and if this was significantly less than the cost of hiring scaffolding, to then ask for a quote to investigate and correct the fault(s). Unanimously agreed.

**Action: Ian Ness to contact electrician**

- 8.3 The same issue applied to the chandelier lights in the nave that have gone. Ian has spoken to an electrician who knows the issue, and will obtain a quote.

**Action: Ian Ness to contact electrician**

## **9. Standing item: St George's Community Hub 2025**

- 9.1 Meeting notes had been received for information.

- 9.2 A paper had been received regarding securing planning permission for the hall. Question: what is 'the need' of the local community? It was noted this will be a 'hub among other hubs': the church needs to be seen as part of the community rather than the community within the church. The hall is a significant size compared to other venues in Jesmond. A further consultation with the community and congregation was suggested.

- 9.3 Planning permission lapses in February unless action towards refurbishment has started. The proposal to demolish the Winskell Room toilet to provide an external access to an enclosed landscaped area for use by children and families at an estimated cost just over £13,500 was rejected. The need for further nursery facilities and then meeting regulatory requirements was not clear. Noted: the toilet proposed for demolition, although very basic, was well used and the police had noted this was the safest for community users.

- 9.4 Question: would it be better to let the current planning permission lapse given we will have to seek planning permission once the funds have been raised for the full works to the hall. The hall is a Grade II listed building so applying for planning permission is very expensive. An offer had been made at personal expense by a member of the PCC to apply for planning permission and listed building consent, but no response had been received to this offer to date.

- 9.5 A counter-proposal to double-glaze a roof-light in the hall was made. Noted: this is consonant with the future scheme and would be seen as commencement against existing planning permission. A quote for replacing one roof-light to be submitted to the PCC electronically. The Treasurer proposed the money could come from the Cookson Fund. Proposed by Kay Plumley that if the total for the quotation is less than £15,000 including VAT, a window can be replaced to secure planning permission; seconded Mike Ranson and agreed by all.

**ACTION: Chair to speak to the Chair of the Buildings and Grounds Group**

- 9.6 Clarified: *planning permission* applies to the external parts of the building; *listed building consent* applies to the whole building including the internal spaces.

9.7 Proposed: a joint meeting of the Hub and PCC to look at plans for the hall (once outcome of 9.8 known).

**ACTION: Chair to arrange**

9.8 Noted: Clare MacLaren will liaise with user groups and community to establish needs.

**ACTION: Clare MacLaren**

## **10. Health and Safety Policy update**

10.1 The PCC thanked Tom Klenka for his work preparing this.

10.2 Noted: amendments needs to be made to paragraph 21 to be provided by the Safeguarding Officer. Section 23, a spelling mistake to be corrected and page 7, Enid Pearson's name needs correcting. Section 17 needs amending, with part e being deleted.

10.3 The Safeguarding Officer will make appropriate amendments, liaising with Tom Klenka. The PCC agreed to adopt once the changes have been made.

**ACTION: Safeguarding Officer**

## **11. Churchwarden updates**

11.1 Noted: the sound system is still being adjusted.

11.2 A paper had been circulated about the lectern. An offer had been received to design a new step with handrails for the lectern, estimated cost £5,000. An alternative was to move the lectern to the chancel step, however, this raised concerns regarding access particularly for the choir when the chancel altar is in place. Wherever the lectern goes, it cannot be moved. Ian Ness is making a box for the current lectern position as a demonstration.

11.3 Suggested: the wooden lectern may be a solution and a home for the historic lectern could be found in the long-term.

11.4 Question: would we need to fund-raise for the £5,000? Noted: someone in the congregation might fund in memory of a loved one. Proposed: the Dexter Legacy be used towards this with the Friends being asked to contribute to the balance. Alternatively, Miss Ann Biles' legacy would also cover the cost. Noted: Miss Biles was an art teacher and this would be a fitting memorial. Also noted, out of courtesy, this should be passed by the Diocesan Advisory Committee. The PCC asked Ian Ness to obtain a further quote and bring to a future PCC.

**ACTION: Ian Ness**

**12. Benefice Statements and Brochure: final review**

- 12.1 Amendment to the brochure. "The Close" will be added to the location of the Vicarage. Proposed: Ian Ness, Seconded: Kay Plumley. Unanimous approval. Following amendment, the paperwork is to be submitted to the Lord Bishop.

**ACTION: Secretary**

- 12.2 The Chair thanked the Secretary for all the work that had gone into preparing the brochure.

**13. Timescale for Vacancy and recruitment strategy**

- 13.1 A paper regarding advertising in the Church Times had been circulated. Suggested: the qualities of the Vicar paragraph in the brochure should be incorporated in the advert.
- 13.2 Proposal to advertise in Church Times: proposed: Sue Vernon; seconded: Mike de la Hunt.
- 13.3 Clare MacLaren offered to draft some text for an advert and will circulate to the PCC.

**ACTION: Clare MacLaren**

- 13.4 All reminded of the importance of attending the Section 12 meeting and the quorum of attendance required.

**14. Deanery Plan**

- 14.1 This item will be discussed at the next meeting.

15. The Reverend Canon Clare MacLaren closed the meeting at 9.55 pm with prayer.

## DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

<b>PCC Meeting</b>	<b>Deadline for Agenda items</b>
Monday 04 December 2023	Sunday 26 November 2023, midday
Tuesday 09 January 2024	Tuesday 02 January 2024, midday
Wednesday 07 February 2024	Sunday 28 January 2024, midday
Monday 04 March 2024	Sunday 25 February 2024, midday
Tuesday 09 April 2024	Sunday 31 March 2024, midday
Sunday 28 April 2024 - ANNUAL MEETINGS (separate notice)	
Monday 13 May 2024	Sunday 05 May 2024, midday

All meetings will begin at 7.30 pm. Venue will be confirmed in the agenda papers.

In addition, the PCC is required to be present on:

- Wednesday 29 November 2023, 7.30 pm at St Hilda's for the Section 12 meeting

## ACTION LOG

Meeting	Item	Action	Status
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	12.1	Alex Walker to speak to Chair about Hospitality Group.	
23-09	7.8	The Treasurer to continue pursuance of the Endowment terms and conditions for the Garden of Remembrance	Ongoing
23-09	11.3	Kay to make application to Community Foundation	
23-09	11.4	Kay to ask Council to change their mowing schedule	
23-10	7.5	Treasurer to authorise Parish Administrator to support GiftAid processing	
23-10	9.2	Chair and Kay to bring fund-raising dinner to Hub Group	
23-11	5.2	Chair to convene Charitable Giving Group; and to circulate list of charities to PCC members	
23-11	6.2	Churchwardens and Safeguarding Officer to bring Safeguarding Action Plan to next meeting	
23-11	7.1	Chair to inform Parish Administrator of new hire rates	
23-11	7.3	Treasurer to explore booking software with Parish Administrator	
23-11	8.2 & 8.3	Ian Ness to obtain quotes from electricians for repair/replace chancel spotlights and chandeliers	
23-11	9.5	Chair to speak to Derek Nicholson about replacing skylight	
23-11	9.7	Chair to arrange joint meeting of the Hub and PCC to review Hall plans	
23-11	9.8	Clare MacLaren to liaise with user groups and community about Hall needs	
23-11	10.3	Safeguarding Officer to amend Health and Safety Policy	
23-11	11.4	Ian Ness to provide quotes for lectern steps	
23-11	12.1	Secretary to make final amendments to Brochure and submit to Lord Bishop	
23-11	13.3	Clare MacLaren to draft advert text	
New action		Completed	Not yet completed (up to 4 months)
			Not yet completed (over 4 months)

