

The Parish of St. John the Evangelist Newbury

Meeting of the PCC held on Tuesday 24th May 2022 beginning at 7.30pm at St John's Church

Present:

The Revd. Gary Collins – Chair

The Revd. Julie Howell - (H&S interim)

David Oats– Churchwardens

Kim Slade – Hon. Treasurer

Sam Brown – Hon. Secretary

Also in attendance:

Andy Grace (AG), Andrew Kingston (AK), Melanie Brown (MB), Stephen Kerry (SK), Aeron Slade (AS), Ann Dixon (AD), Jennifer Wright (JW)

1	Opening Prayer & Welcome		
2	Apologies for absence: Margaret Baker, Jeremy Wright, Jennie Marwick-Evans		
3	Correspondence No correspondence received		
4	Minutes of the previous meeting PCC meeting held 5 th May 2022-were approved by unanimous vote by the PCC		
	Matters Arising from previous minutes No actions to carry over		
6	Appointing new Officers Electoral Roll, H&S officer, Revd Gary updated that we need to fill the Electoral Roll and H&S Officer posts. AG offered to fulfil the Electoral Roll position, AF proposed and AS seconded. There was no name forthcoming for the H&S post. Revd Julie indicated that she would be happy to undertake the H&S role for now, but we need to fill the post on a permanent basis and aim to have a handover. Revd Gary thanks JW for all her efforts as H&S officer		
	Action: - All PCC to consider candidates (who are on the electoral role) for the post of H&S Officer		
7	Safeguarding Update. Revd Gary asked if any issues have been reported or any concerns raised? The PCC confirmed no issues reported and no concerns raised. SK updated the PCC of the new online training available regarding Domestic Abuse. SK indicated it is up to everyone to be aware and looking at every activity as a PCC. SK encouraged us to go online and undertake a DBS check (Disclosure and Baring Service). Revd Julie indicated that if you are visiting others (and it may be vulnerable adults also) you should do a DBS check. It was confirmed that everyone on the PCC has undertaken online Basic Safeguarding training.		
8	H&S Update. JW asked if access to the path around the lady chapel was wide enough for a double buggy now that the planters are in place. SK will review. Revd Julie asked when the lines would be painted, and a deadline was set for the end of June 22. DO updated that there will be a grid that will deter people parking outside of the Preschool. No accidents, incidents or near misses reported.		

	Action: - Revd Gary & DO – Application of the white lines by the end of June’22		
9	<p>GDPR Update. New GDPR forms will be sent out in June 22. DO confirmed we have access to the two previous sets of forms, so this activity is to make sure our records are up to date.</p>		
	Action: - Revd Gary to include in weekly email as well as paper forms		
10	<p>Deanery Update. SK updated that the next meeting is on the 16th June. On the agenda for the meeting is clergy deployment, Living in Love and Faith feedback, Problem Solving activity and the Parish Share Formula proposed changes.</p>		
11	<p>Financial Report KS reported that for the first 4 months of the year, we are showing end of year £15k down with an expectation we will end up £10k down – i.e., we will be another year in deficit. Gas tariff will go up in June. We are running 2 Good exchange projects - essential running costs, i-CAP - both match funded. For iCAP - £4k raised so far, no big grants received yet. Good Exchange no longer charges fees. Paid 2nd part of the new chairs. Expecting dividends end of the month. KS recommended that the use of the contactless payment facility be offered to external hirers, subject to a small commission. AS updated that current Sumup software fees are 1.1% for debit cards and 1.3% for Credit Cards, KS proposed we should agree to charge 0.9 - 0.7% (i.e. the SumUp software usual fee + St John’s admin fees), external hires only. Proposer AD and Seconder AK, passed by the PCC. KS updated that we should try and increase our income and reduce our bills – this could be a focus of a ‘Finance Forum/Steering Group’. Revd Gary supported assembling a group to get some creative thinking around the resources we do have. KS also tabled running stewardship renewal days and finance surgeries. DO supported that this should be held as soon as possible and the recommendation (which was agreed by the PCC) to hold this towards the end of September ’22.</p>		
	Action: - KS – Authorised to charge external hirers for the use of SumUp payment method (0.9 - 0.7%) making the total deduction from the payment, 2%		
12	<p>Vicar’s Report Revd Gary updated the PCC that most churches are trying to find their way post the pandemic. However, he is seeing positive connections with the community and is seeing a sense of positive harmony. He did report that some of the new ideas being tried are proving to be a challenge. Bigger questions around what we are here for but ultimately, we keep trying as there is no magic answer. Revd Gary pointed out to the PCC that we should continue to experiment and try new ideas.</p>		
13	<p>Progress Update at St. John’s.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Floor Repairs, signs of work, Revd Gary reported that he has received some feedback on options to resolve floor cracks, ongoing • Chairs, now delivered and in place • Lady Chapel carpet, in progress • iCAP, JW asked for clarification over the target. AS updated, this is £162k which has increased due to the inflationary forecast. A quantity surveyor has provided the estimate within the £162k. AS will circulate the breakdown. Revd Gary updated that the launch will be at the Patronal Festival (Sunday 26th June). AS asked for any leads for fundraising to forward to him. • Organ Project Update - post iCAP – DO replayed that a sensible approach may be for CS to be asked what he feels needs to be done, and we could see if we could fund it and the organ would be a good use of funding from legacies. AG updated that organs are not being looked after (nationally) and the organ is the most expensive part of the fabric of the church. JW fed back that the organ playing on Sunday was lovely. AS updated that there are grants available for organ repairs. Agreed that DO will ask CS to update the PCC on the work and costs required for the organ. 		
	<p>Action: - PCC – Channel all leads for fundraising through AS - DO – Contact CS to obtain list of target actions for the church organ and ballpark estimates</p>		

14	<p>Greening St John's Updates / Planting / Green Audit SK updated that against a backdrop of two areas in Newbury have been mown in error by contractors our wildflowers look great, and the planters (with bee friendly plants) are expected to yield Brussel sprouts. Revd Gary updated that the garden is looking lovely. Revd Gary thanked Ann for painting the handrail. Revd Julie updated on the Green Audit Findings, Standing Committee will review the audit and then prioritise the recommendations to pass onto the PCC and Green Group. Revd Julie updated that by end of June '22 we can feed the output into the Finance Group. AS asked whether we can quantify the benefit of the work done to date in terms of carbon benefit. Revd Julie updated that there is some data so we can work on a formula to present. Revd Julie also looking at a recycling document to cover all recycling.</p>		
	<p>Action: - Revd Julie – Update the PCC end of June with Green Audit Findings</p>		
15	<p>Financial Reserve Policy KS updated that we have received a request from BB to ask us to consider what our plans should be for the generous legacies that have been left to the church. KS updated that there are some strict guidelines as to what are categorised as 'Reserves'. The intention is to devise a Reserve Policy for St Johns to be included in the annual accounts. KS advised we should have a group appointed by Oct/Nov, gather facts and figures by end of the 2022 (e.g. green audit, organ works, quinquennial report, boiler breaking, etc), Jan-March hold workshops to devise policy, write policy, issue a reserves policy in April 2023 as part of the 2022 Accounts. Revd Julie highlighted that we needed to have contingency funds in place in case of emergencies. AK updated that the investments could reduce with the fluctuating stock market. Revd Gary supported a team to work with KS on the financial reserves policy – possibility the first real test of the 'Finance Forum'.</p>		
	<p>Action: - KS / PCC – Volunteers sought for Finance Working Group and hence Reserves Policy derivation</p>		
16	<p>Living in Love and Faith St Georges hosting a new course next week (available for the benefice). Revd Gary is promoting a progressive and inclusive church, and attendance at this course is encouraged.</p>		
17	<p>St John's School Connection Revd Gary updated all is going well.</p>		
18	<p>The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Various initiatives have been highlighted in the Weekly Newsletter. After the All-Age Church Service we will be hosting with some cake and extended refreshment. Revd Gary will contact Newbury Spring Festival to encourage use of the church during the Newbury Spring Festival next year.</p>		
19	<p>Benefice Expansion update – SK updated that the ETG has been meeting behind the scenes. The task group has met the PCC and the Archdeacon has approved the next steps and now further due diligence is being undertaken. The proposal is to have 3 PCCs and 3 Parishes within the Benefice. Information will be provided and then a decision will be made via the PCCs on proposals to be presented. By Spring 2023 a decision will have been made.</p>		
20	<p>Any Other Business – No AOB was tabled or discussed</p>		

Closing Benediction, the meeting closed at 21:25.

Dates of next meetings:

Thursday 14/07/22 Standing / Finance Committee Meeting - Zoom

Thursday 21/07/22 Parochial Church Council Meeting - Church, Upper Room