

The Parish of St. John the Evangelist Newbury

Parochial Church Council Meeting held in-person on Thursday 21st September 2023 beginning at 7.30pm

Present:

The Revd. Gary Collins – Chair
David Oats (DO) – Churchwarden
Alison Foulkes (AF) – Churchwarden
Kim Slade (KS) – Hon. Treasurer

Also in attendance:

Margaret Baker (MB), Melanie Brown (MAB), Andy Grace (AG), Stephen Kerry (SK), Andrew Kingston (AK), Jennie Marwick-Evans (JME), Christopher Sears (CS), Aeron Slade (AS), Jeremy Wright (JW)

1	Opening Prayer & Welcome		
2	Apologies for Absence & Any Other Business Sam Brown (SB)		
3	Correspondence No correspondence.		
4	Minutes of the previous meeting held on 27 th July 2023. The minutes were approved by the PCC with DO proposing & AS seconding.		
5	Matters Arising from Previous Minutes. No matters arising, apart from those addressed in sections below.		
6	PCC – Safeguarding Update SK – Nothing to report from St John’s, which is good. Diocesan Safeguarding Sunday coming up & there is a training list. SK to give link for these to Revd Gary/MAB for distribution. Revd Gary – 6 th Commandment drama is a good “example”, & we need to keep our eyes open. Action: SK to send link to Revd Gary/MAB for distribution.		
7	PCC - H&S Update MB - Nothing has been reported. Revd Gary confirmed the lights on the tree had been raised. DO - Disabled badges in carpark have been repainted.		
8	Deanery Update No Synod since the last PCC. Synod currently has no Secretary.		
9	Vicars’s Report: Revd Gary - Now entering a very busy time in the run up to Christmas. Lots of opportunities to welcome people into the church. Need to be mindful of welcoming those who have walked in. As PCC, we need to lead the way, & although we are good, we need to continue with that. The flower rota has been a v good way of being inclusive & welcoming.		
10	Financial Report: KS - YTD - down £28k. Forecast by end of year - down £99k. Why? Big spends so far this year - some regular, some one-off planned, some one-off emergency - £1.5k on alternative heating source whilst boiler down, £6k on fixing boiler (much of this has been refunded from insurance company), £8k on building works - things mentioned in quinquennial, & floor repairs, £1.5k on lamps, £2k on boiler replacement feasibility study for green alternatives, £6k on organ improvement works - part 1 of phase 1, £30k up to end July on parish share, £12k up to end July on gas, £4.7k up to end July on electricity, £2k on accountancy audit. Upcoming - quinquennial report fees - £2k, organ works rest of phase 1 - est. £14k, boiler replacement - £60k+. So far this year have drawn down £15k from Kath Gibbs legacy - nominally £2k on boiler, £6k on organ, £7k on deficit coverage. Match funding from Gex for essential running cost and iCAP still available. Match funding for iCAP earned to date still to be released - this will occur when we can prove to Good Exchange that works are underway, and we need the money to pay these bills.		
11	iCAP: Phillip Bevan (PB) kindly helping us with more detailed plans for the DAC. Need to look at designs to go on the glass manifestation. KS – for payments £10-£15K funds available without notice, but other accounts need 3 months notice. AK - Maybe leave another month till notice is given. DO – Essential Running		

	Costs matched funding ending in Oct but AS can look at extending it. Matched funding for iCAP ending in Jan.		
12	<p>Boiler: Motion to be voted on by PCC: <i>The PCC is being asked to vote to recommend proceeding with sourcing reputable suppliers to quote for an Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP) & a smaller electric boiler hybrid solution, in line with feasibility study recommendations. (with all future electricity sourced from a green tariff).</i></p> <p>SB was not able to be present at the meeting due to work commitments, However he had sent an extensive document to the PCC explaining his reasons to not want to invest in ASHP, this was acknowledged and appreciated by all members of PCC.</p> <p>SFC recommendation – put out to tender for installation of ASHP with small electric boiler backup. The Diocese want us to be net 0 by 2030 so gas boiler proposal would be rejected. DO – Pros of AHSP – have had a positive feasibility study saying that ASHP would work at St John’s with electric backup, we have large bore pipes & low temperature flow. Underfloor pipes in situ & they will be pressure tested b4 use. Under floor pipes working fine. We want to heat every day so under floor heating is the ideal solution. We are already on 3 phase electric supply should we need it for the electric boiler. We have good site for ASHP, & noise won’t be an issue –industrial garden neighbours. We can apply as a “demonstrator” church, & we would be well placed as not many are applying. Could be granted £10-17K. We have space in the loft to add more insulation easily which would be a good thing although not essential. We wouldn’t need double glazing, but it would be a plus. Hydrogen is not being run out across the country it is not suitable, v flammable and leaks more than other sources. (I’m ok with this, I think DO did say this, and in fact has just become more relevant) Unlike many churches, we are v lucky as we can afford to start the project & need a new heating solution. Panels on the roof could be used in the future to generate the otherwise expensive electricity, but we haven’t asked for these yet. SK - AHSP are reasonably maintenance free & reliable. DO - If a new gas boiler was installed, the current chimney could not be used & holes would need to be drilled through the floor and wall in the flower room, so installation would not be simple. CS - How does the room next to the choir loft get heated? DO - via the radiators, but the system needs to be properly bleed and balanced to bring these up to temperature. We may need addition secondary heating depending on how well the new system works. JW – ASHP solution costly to put in & running costs are high. KS – there may be lots of grants if we go the green route. Maybe big capitol cost but could get some help by being a trailblazer. Its morally the right thing to do to make the church green. Revd Gary – we need to talk to Leckhampstead Church as they said there are lots of grants available. We need to do due diligence & there is a great deal of uncertainly in this & it’s important that concerns are raised about it not working & about the costs. The science will work but the technology is changing all the time. SK – biggest issue is whether the under-floor heating will work due to its age. DO – the quinquennial report says the under-floor heating should be okay. The pipes either side of the leak near the rear door were in good condition, so that is a good sign. Need to check on the insulation throughout. JW –do we have a plan B should this be approved & then not work? We have quote for gas boilers which need updating if the feasibility studies from installers indicate that AHSP is not a goer, then that would be the basis of a request to DAC to not go green. Budget for AHSP £35K+VAT (Jan 2023 figure), gas £23K incl VAT (older quotes). The PCC decided to vote on the first half of the motion only & not about the green tariff. Green tariffs to be debated at another time.</p> <p>Proposed: Revd Gary, Seconded: DO, Votes for motion: 11, Votes against: 1 (approved proxy), Abstentions: 2</p>		
13	<p>Organ Updates CS - We have had a meeting with the Diocesan organ advisers, the outcome of which was very positive. They agreed that the tonal changes we were proposing were a good idea & will support us. However, they did have some concerns regarding the mechanics of the instrument, particularly the action of the Swell. Although this was an issue flagged up as minor by Shepherds, they thought it rather more serious & recommend that it be looked at before any other work is done. Their report should be with us shortly.</p>		

14	Progress Updates on St John's Maintenance & use of church Revd Gary – we have ticked through list so now need to address the quinquennial report.		
15	Worship – Children's inclusion in Worship Revd Gary – this is ongoing. The congregation is diversifying. SK – last forest church had over 50 people with lovely music & readings, & it was the best one ever, with great feedback. FG – forest church fits in to give St Michael's a service.		
16	Worship – Reintroducing the Common Cup: Revd Gary – this will start next Sunday (24/09/2023), however we need to be aware of time of year & rise of COVID although we also need to get back into step with the rest of the church. Everyone to come to front rail & if you prefer taking the wafer only, you walk away after receiving the wafer. MB – what about the distribution either side as previously discussed? SFC felt that this required extra servers and that the chalice server will be some steps behind the celebrant so if someone wants wafer only, that person will just walk away. Servers just need to keep an eye on who has had the wafer, where people are etc. Perhaps we have a sides person at the front who directs people. However some of the PCC are really disappointed by the reintroduction & are very concerned about others & possible health implications. DO – We could maybe revisit at a later point if there are requests to do so, in future.		
17	St Johns School Connection: Revd Gary – going well. Now Revd Gary sees children in Y1 etc who have come through from toddlers which is lovely. Lots of school issues going on but, they are positive.		
18	APCM – Confirming Sides-people: All in favour.		
19	Any Other Business: No Other business.		

Closing Benediction (meeting closed at 21:15)

Date & time of next meetings: SFC 09/11/23 7:30pm (Zoom) | PCC 23/11/23 7:30pm (in-person)