

**St Paul's Church Dorking PCC**  
**Monday 20th January 2020: 7.45pm**

Chair: Ruth Bushyager

Minutes: Caroline Rose

**Minutes (final)**

**Welcome:** Alex opened the meeting with a reflection on 2 Corinthians : Treasures in jars of clay.

**Present :** John Arnold, Catherine Barker, Malcolm Boother, Ruth Bushyager, Alex Cacouris, Catherine Carter Shaw, Lawrence Comber, Graham Everness, Alison Everness, Oli Fricker, Steve Henwood, Dawn Lucas, Katie Mackay, Ian Poole, Caroline Rose, Paul Studley, Karen Wheatley, Nick White

**1. Nursery Report from the Chair of the Nursery Management Committee: Ali Studley**

Ruth explained:

- that neither Alison Studley nor Jeremy Hall could attend the meeting for urgent family and personal reasons but that she, Ruth had received a detailed briefing to inform the discussion.
- the late provision of paperwork was unavoidable on this occasion and apologies given. . Paper copies were made available at the meeting.
- that the planned nursery items had been abandoned in order to focus on the urgent financial situation.

The financial report prepared by Jeremy Hall was examined and Ruth outlined the current financial position of the nursery, the roots of which lay in a shift in Government funding over the last two years. In the light of no forthcoming government funding changes being projected, the actions taken over the last year to increase income and reduce expenditure as detailed on the nursery financial report were noted. The popularity of our Forest School facility led by Jacqui Moulder, a qualified practitioner, an extension to afternoon sessions and successful fundraising were highlighted as particularly important in increasing income. The Nursery is still in deficit. Ruth stressed that the Nursery Management Committee continued to look at ways of paring expenditure including looking at staffing levels within the acceptable pupil staff ratios.

PCC considered

- **The permission sought by the nursery to continue to operate , with a commitment from the Church to accept the risk and underwrite the nursery finances.** OF stressed the serious nature of the financial management of the nursery finances which reflects on the financial standing of the church. OF shared the letter received from the external examiners highlighting their note of reduced fee income alongside rising staff costs of £8000 which demonstrates poor

management of funds. Although this was subsequently explained to the examiners they will be watching in future. This matter will have to be declared to the Charity Commissioners. OF indicated that the Church is bound to underwrite the Nursery but there was debate as to the point at which financial support should be withdrawn and the nursery told it will have to close. There were concerns raised about the fluctuation in income and costs over the last 3 years and the likelihood of another fluctuation. Questions were asked about pupil numbers. It was noted that there is a large contingent of 4 year olds, 14, who will leave this summer . The consensus was that the PCC needed a clear expectation of fee income outlook and the level of confidence the Nursery Management had in their projections to reach a conclusion about future financial support.

- **Reserves:** How much the nursery should be asked to hold in reserve?: 6-9 months operational cost was suggested as a safe level of reserves but certainly enough to pay staff redundancy . A sum of £20,000 with a buffer of a certain number of children was suggested as a starting indication of PCC expectations . It was agreed that Jeremy Hall needs to do some financial modelling and stress testing before the PCC can make a decision about this and estimate how long it would take to build up an acceptable level of reserves.
- **Appointment of a new Headteacher:** Ruth explained that Tanya's resignation as headteacher, with effect from April 2020 was not a surprise as she had moved to Sussex. PCC agreed to Alison Studley's request that Jacqui Moulder, experienced and well qualified be made Acting Headteacher for summer term 2019 in order to provide continuity, give confidence to nursery families and time to reconsider the Job Spec and recruit for September 2020. No promise would be given to Jacqui of a permanent appointment . It was also agreed that an acting Deputy Head be appointed for the summer term 2020.
- **The frequency of Nursery reports to the PCC.** It was agreed that Jeremy Hall report to the next PCC meeting in March and then a Nursery report termly thereafter in the immediate future.
- **The financial management of the Nursery.** The work that Jeremy Hall has done to sort out past accounting errors and uncover the true financial position was recognised by the PCC. There was some concern that the incorrect allocation of £10,400 income to 2018 accounts rather than 2019 accounts had not been picked up earlier. It was thought prudent to ask Jeremy if he would like some financial support in the form of someone ( perhaps from the PCC ) on the Nursery Management Committee who could be a second pair of eyes or even the establishment of a Financial Sub Committee. Concern was expressed that this may appear that we do not have full confidence in Jeremy who has brought to light the financial problems and worked hard to rectify the situation. It was agreed that Jeremy be invited to the next Standing Committee to give a financial update and be asked if he would like support.
- PCC agreed that Tara be asked to stand down as bookkeeper and Judith Ellis asked if she would stand in as financial support in a temporary voluntary capacity. It was recognised that this will have to be done with sensitivity.

Ruth impressed in the PCC that amidst all of this concern and moving OFSTED goalposts that the Nursery continued to meet Outstanding OFSTED criteria.

## **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies had been received from Annabel Blanch, Maggie Hill, Jenny Firth, Jac Gardener (apologies received from Simon Fereday later )

### **1. Minutes of the meeting on 11th November 2019**

Three changes to the minutes were requested and agreed :Item 4 : a word omission, Item 6 a change of wording : Item 8 the deletion of a sentence. In addition, PCC secretary acknowledged that she had overlooked the item regarding the Church Organ in her final copy of the minutes. It was agreed that the necessary changes would be made and a new draft circulated to the PCC.

The new draft was subsequently circulated and approved as a correct record of the meeting held on November 11th 2019.

There were no matters arising not taken elsewhere.

### **2. MAP Jan 2020 Update**

Ruth thanked Laura for coming to lead this item. Laura recapped the process employed in Summer 2019 to draw up the present MAP which has a limited focus in comparison with last year. With reference to the MAP update included in the meeting papers Laura gave a brief review of some of the actions taken highlighting

- Prayer: The successful prayer survey in which 76 people participated has provided detailed responses that have given the leadership a good steer in the preparation of their teaching and the establishment of tuesday prayer time.
- .Discipleship: Giving: Light touch gift day; continuing small group resourcing and supporting parenting, important in growing children's faith.

Laura focused on Integration of Newcomers as an area which requires attention explaining that people who come may be unchurched , have no experience of church or have no definite faith or come looking for a new church. If they are not welcomed and integrated they stop coming. PCC was asked to divide into groups of 2 or 3 and come up with some ideas as to how we can improve this area of discipleship. The PCC fed back a wealth of ideas regarding a welcome desk ; information about how to get involved- Job vacancies and church activities; matching up newcomers with others at the same age or stage of life , finding a way of easier integration into small groups, arriving at church early enough to talk to people, coffee after the service. It was agreed that there needed to be a culture shift and a crack team to drive this initiative.

Ruth thanked Laura for coming and for her work on MAP.

**MAP: 2021. A vision for the future for Outward Giving:** not discussed and carried forward to the next meeting

### **1. Health and Safety report and policy review :**

Steve Moggs explained that he required the PCC to review the updated Health and Safety Policy . Steve Moggs, Health and Safety Officer spoke to the policy documents circulated

before the meeting explaining the minor amendments to the policies and the addition of new policies as follows:

- The disbanding of the position of Facilities Manager and subsequent reallocation of responsibilities, the addition of the position and responsibilities of CY Minister and general grammatical/ rewording changes account for most alterations.
- The addition or updating of additional policies including: Visits off site; the use of candles; COSHH; Asbestos;
- Amendments made to the Fire Evacuation procedures in line with fire service requirements.

Steve dealt satisfactorily with a query regarding apparent changes to the event organiser, confirmed that the Nursery had their own policy and that the condition of ladders would be checked by Paul Studley.

Thanks was expressed to Steve for his excellent report and work on these policies and the PCC agreed that Ruth sign these updated policies later this month.

## 2. Written reports

- **Standing Committee** : RB asked PCC to use their hearts, eyes and ears to think of someone who could replace Ian not just someone who would fulfil the legal role descriptors but who would be the right fit for Dorking and this resource church providing the right balance on our team. Alex asked if Ian could write a brief bullet point document outlining the role for CR to circulate to the PCC.
- **World Church**: Ruth Thanked Karen for her report. Karen highlighted: the success of Prince David's visit to St Paul's both in terms of his preaching and meeting with the India Team. and drew attention to the recent three year review of our commitment to Stuart and Jenny Oliphant and the decision to continue supporting them.
- **Fabric** : Paul elaborated on points raised in his written report submitted before the meeting, drawing attention to the sterling work undertaken by Andrew Rutty in drawing up a 'whole view' plan for the Church garden. He explained the need for using industrial strength rat poison and the need for people to desist from turning the heating up for immediate effect as it takes 4 hours to fully respond. He was pleased to report that present building works were likely to be completed on or under budget.
- **Deanery Synod** : PCC attention was drawn to the changes to Deanery Synod representation outlined in the report presented for this meeting, allowing us one more deanery synod representative, which in turn will increase influence as part of the electorate for the General Synod. Promotion of this opportunity to encourage people to stand as a Deanery Synod representative ideally by APCM was encouraged.

## 7. Safeguarding:

The review of Safeguarding in 2019 and plans for 2020 scheduled for this meeting was carried forward to the next meeting on March 16th due to the pressure of time.

Steve Henwood explained that the PCC must select a Safeguarding Rep from among their number. After some discussion it was agreed that Ruth, as a member of the safeguarding Committee would take this role and that on Ian Poole's suggestion, that if something needs

investigating that we would co-opt someone appropriate to help with additional scrutiny in this important area.

Proposed: K Mackay

Seconded: J Arnold.

Agreed unanimously

## 8. Correspondence/AOB

- Changes to rules and regulations including Deanery Synod Representation 2020: Attention was drawn to the document summarising these changes included in the folder of papers for this meeting.
- **Lambeth Conference 2020** We will be hosting a Bishop from the Anglican Communion as part of the Lambeth Conference 2020. We have been given the pleasure of hosting Bishop Matt Brain from Australia and his wife Rachael. Karen and Rob Wheatley will be the hosts. There will be a programme of deanery visiting. PCC members may be invited to participate / assist around the 20-21 July. Please pray for Archbishop Justin as he prepares for Lambeth 2020.
- **Visit of Archbishop Justin Welby to the Guildford Diocese in March 2019:** Ruth outlined some of the events including the Young Theologians Conference at St Paul's Church, Evensong at St Martin's. A reminder was given to the PCC of the opportunity for members to attend the Diocesan event the evening of March 19th at Lakeside Camberley for which bookings can be made online.

## 9. New Staff Appointments

9.11

- Update on the appointment of the Curate. Ruth reported that all was on schedule for Becky Taylor to begin her curacy here in June.
- The appointment of Nursery headteacher. This item was taken as part of Item One : The Nursery
- Appointment of a caretaker : this item was taken as part of Item 10 the Financial Report.

## 10. Finance

Treasurer's Report: Oli talked to his report circulated before the meeting, confirming that he had made minor changes to the 2020 budget based on comments made at the November meeting, recommendations made by Graham Everness and as a result of changing circumstances as detailed in the report circulated before the meeting.

The PCC was asked to support the recommendations of the Standing Committee that we appoint a Caretaker, to be engaged as a contractor rather than an employee. Ruth explained that whilst she understood we were adding expenditure to an agreed budget, the Standing Committee had talked at length after consultation with the office staff and recommended this appointment as essential. She advised that at present members of the staff team and volunteers were undertaking heavy physical and inappropriate work in addition to their own duties.

Oli confirmed that although he was not completely happy about the decision and the subsequent major change to the agreed budget, he would agree to £5000 be allocated for

this appointment which Ian thought was realistic given the contracted hours required. There was an appreciation of the problem of adding to the budget at the same time as answering the needs of the Church.

There was a discussion about the necessity of some of the duties and the caretaker needs as detailed in the Job description (circulated before the meeting) and the number of hours it is proposed: 10 hours a week, term time (39 weeks) and up to 130 hours maximum at £10.71 p/h, our living wage.

Concern was raised that despite the preference of many for the flexibility of this method of employment, we were offering this position on a contractual basis which provides less employment security for the worker and questions whether this was the right thing we should be doing as a church.

Ruth asked permission of the PCC that this position be advertised as proposed and that an individual identified by the Standing Committee as fitting the bill be approached.

16 voted in favour

2 Abstentions

#### **11. CYM Off-site visits**

Steve requested permission for participating in the Soul Connect weekend Event for school years 7-13) in Dorking in March including a sleepover and events in The Priory School and other churches. This was agreed, subject to the expected permissions and completion of risk assessments for insurance purposes. Catherine Carter Shaw queried the completion of checks for forthcoming off-site visits. Steve indicated that these were detailed on the computer and could be viewed.

**12. AOB.** PCC attention was drawn to new higher level parish safeguarding training on February 29th for those leading groups in church. PCC members welcome.

**Meeting closed with Prayers at 9.40**

#### **Dates of future meetings**

Next PCC Meetings: Monday March 16th

APCM : Thursday April 30th

PCC Away Day - provisional date of 16 May, The Dell, Ashted Church

**Booked morning and lunch**