



ST MARGARET'S CHURCH

To know and share God's transforming love with one another,
our local community and the wider world

Minutes PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING **held at 8pm in the Parish Office** **on Tuesday July 9th, 2024**

Present; Revd Hannah Gordon (Chair), Jenny Smith, Julia Thompson, John Hill, Tom Sanderson, Kat Wicksteed, Jill Lindsay, Ray King, Madeleine MacCallum, Rosalind Lumberg, Revd John Wates, Eamonn Davern

Guest: Safeguarding Item: Samantha Esparon

Apologies: Lucy Wales, Janice Whittle

1 The meeting was opened at 8.00 pm with a prayer .

2 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on May 21st, 2024, were approved, and were signed by Revd Hannah Gordon.

3 Matters Arising

Jen advised that Alison Elson wanted to thank St Margarets PCC for the offer to contribute to the cost of repair to a toilet at St Peters Woodmansterne, however sufficient funds had now been identified by St Peter's PCC to cover this expense.

4 Safeguarding

Samantha Esparon presented the one-year Safeguarding Action Plan. A key objective of the Plan is to collect data to review how the Parish maintains Safeguarding standards, focus on continually improving these, and develop a Safeguarding culture. A questionnaire will be prepared to be completed by the congregation to assess their perceptions on Parish compliance with Safeguarding requirements.

A Team of Safeguarding Group Leaders will be created to function as Safeguarding champions.

A Safeguarding Sunday will include activities to raise awareness of the subject. The intention is that Samantha delivers a talk during services which will also include an opportunity for completion of the questionnaire.

Options for improved secure storage of records will also be explored.

New PCC members should complete basic level one Safeguarding training, and an in-person level 2 event will be arranged, open to the whole congregation. It is planned to arrange this activity during the autumn, to take place as soon as possible after the beginning of September.

Action: *Julia Thompson and Rosalind Lumberg volunteered to assist Samantha with the administration of Safeguarding procedures.*

5 Parish Accounts

John Grant had agreed to again provide Independent Examination of the Accounts. Martin Mabbutt has agreed to prepare these for 2024; however, he has advised that this is the final year he will be available for this task. A new accounting system, Paxton, will be installed to be ready for use in preparing the 2025 accounts, this will provide new expenditure categories to enable more focussed management of Parish funds.

Efforts to recruit an Honorary Treasurer had unfortunately been unsuccessful. It was decided to make one further attempt to identify a candidate, promoting the vacancy with the wider congregation and where possibly through local voluntary organizations including the Chipstead Village Preservation Society.

The reconstituted Finance and HR committee will meet to review the current situation regarding Parish finances (Hannah will attend this meeting if possible). If efforts to recruit an Honorary Treasurer prove to be unsuccessful the committee will develop proposals for an exercise to fill the post through recruitment of a paid post holder.

Revd John Wates proposed a motion that PCC records its strong disquiet at the continuing absence of a Treasurer and that a paid appointment be expedited if the current (final) attempt to identify a volunteer is unsuccessful.

PCC unanimously seconded this proposal.

6 Staff Salaries and Job Descriptions

A motion to support the implementation of the Finance and HR Committee recommendation to award a 5% increase was proposed by Rosalind Lumberg, seconded by Ray King, and unanimously carried by PCC.

A discussion on Staff Pension provision, and a review of the Youth and Community, and Administrator roles, will be arranged for a future PCC.

7 PAYE Outsourcing

The Administrator role currently includes responsibility for processing PAYE. This; constitutes a potential conflict of interest and risk, runs counter to accepted good practice in finance management, and would place the administrator in an unfair situation if an inadvertent error were

identified. Hannah is exploring options to outsource this function to a third-party supplier to establish a “Chinese Wall “between PAYE processes and other aspects of finance administration.

Action: *Hannah will advise the Finance and HR Committee of potential options for outsourcing PAYE.*

8 Parish Support Fund

PCC needs to advise the Archdeacon of St Margarets 2024-2024 Parish Support Fund contribution. This will be discussed at the September PCC and background information will be circulated to PCC members prior to the meeting.

9 Church Security

A security review is required. This will commence with; a review of key security to establish whether all current key holders still require sets of keys, and new arrangements being considered for storing keys in Church.

Hannah requested that a PCC member take the lead on Security and drafting a new policy. Julia offered to review this when completed.

Actions: *Jen to review key holders list and propose a revised list of volunteers as essential key holders.*

Jon to investigate possible locations for a key safe.

10 Premises Update

A hard copy of the faculty had now been received; this included a list of essential compliance conditions.

DM music will visit to update their quote for the AV installation, subject to agreement this will take place during either October or November. It is estimated that the work will take two weeks, and the company will require 50% payment in advance of the installation.

Notice has been received of the completion of essential external repairs to the Mugswell Hall cladding and porch, as responsible landlord the PCC will cover the total cost £7519.00. Essential electrical repairs to the PA Hall have been identified, these are estimated to cost circa £2,000. Work has also been commissioned to repair the Consumer Unit and PA system in the Orchard.

The Church Organ needs to be serviced, estimates will be obtained, and potential costs referred back for PCC consideration.

As part of the Premises Team programme to visit churches to explore options for upgrading church lighting Jon has visited a Church in Biggin Hill to further inform options.

Action: *Jon will present his recommendations for Church Lighting improvement to the September PCC*

12 Bishops Certificate

Hannah described the Bishops Certificate course explaining that it was designed to meet the interests of individual participants, to increase their knowledge and deepen their faith. The cost of the course was £220 per year, including a one-night residential event. The Diocese were encouraging members of congregations to participate. Hannah suggested that the PCC contributing towards the fees could encourage take up of the course.

Revd John Wates proposed that PCC meet 50% of the course fee, Jill seconded this proposal which was carried unanimously by the PCC.

13 Parish Away Day.

An Away Day to provide an opportunity for the Congregation to consider the future St Margarets Vision will be organised. The preferred dates are November 2024 or February 2025, suitable venues will be sought for this event.

Action: Jen to investigate the availability of Wychcroft and other suitable local venues for the Away Day and advise PCC.

14 Future Items for PCC Agenda

Hannah described the vital role of PCC Members in ensuring that matters of interest and/or concern to the Congregation were discussed. PCC was therefore reminded that they could propose items for the PCC agenda both in a personal capacity and particularly subjects identified from discussions with members of the Congregation. Details of subjects for potential discussion at PCC should be sent to the Secretary.

15 Talking to the Congregation about Giving

Hannah advised that she would be raising the issue of Giving during the autumn. The issue would be raised during services on a specific Sunday, and an accompanying note would be prepared for the Congregation.

16 Bigger Thinking

PCC concluded the initial discussion on range of Parish activities which had begun at the May meeting. All would be reviewed as part of a refresh of the future St Margaret's Mission and Vision. These range Hannah advised that following further consultation the early Sunday service would start at 9 am from the first Sunday in August. The monthly midweek Communion was being suspended. Hannah stressed that all decisions could be the subject of periodic future review.

17 Parish Support Fund 2025

The issue of St Margaret's 2025 Parish Support Fund contribution was deferred for discussion at the September PCC meeting.

AOB

Revd John Wates advised PCC that the Chipstead Village Preservation Society (CVPS) were interested in acquiring some woodland adjacent to the Church which had recently come onto the market. The intention was to enhance its protection against future development, and CVPS had

queried whether St Margarets were interested in part funding this potential acquisition?
The issue was remitted to the Standing Committee which would consider the proposal and inform PCC accordingly.

Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday September 10th 8pm in the Parish Office