

St John's Church Egham

Minutes of PCC meeting, 27 May 2019, in the Easter Centre

Attendees: Keith Malcouronne (Chair), Conrad Benefield (Secretary), Debbie Benefield, Mel Cramer, Steve Cresswell, Phil Darby, Emma Evans, Rev. Simon Fraser, Sarah Gillies, Chris Gray, Joyce Johnson, Paul Kahn, Chris King, Victoria Mcharo, Michael Senanayake, Sam Senanayake, Stacey Sobers and Sally Thompson.

Apologies: Rev. Esther Prior, Phil Holloway, Sara Holloway, Grace Hopkins, Andrew Tebboth and Geoff Wickes.

1. Opening prayer and welcome

Keith Malcouronne welcomed everyone to the meeting and welcomed new members to the PCC (including those absent), namely the new churchwardens Sam Senanayake and Phil Holloway, and new members Mel Cramer, Grace Hopkins and Stacey Sobers.

Apologies for absence were received as noted above.

2. Devotional thought

Rev Simon Fraser gave a devotional thought, comparing the story of Jabez (who appears in just two verses in the Bible (1 Chronicles 4:9-10) and the great Commission of Jesus (Matthew 28:18-20). Simon reflected on how Jabez (whose name means 'pain') is honourable and blessed by God, but never heard of again, whereas the Great Commission, which also comes with a blessing ("I am with you always") comes with a command which reaches down the generations to us today. At the same time, Simon noted that God granted Jabez' request to enlarge his territory, and Jesus commissions us to enlarge His kingdom.

Simon went on to reflect how none of us would be at PCC this evening if others hadn't 'passed the baton of faith' from one generation to another. Simon concluded by observing that the baton is now in our hands, and that while it is right for PCC to be concerned with the running of the church, we must also remember the empty chairs in church, which represent souls who are yet to be saved. Simon's prayer was that as we cry out to God, He might bless us and have His hand upon us as we seek to enlarge His kingdom.

A short time of open prayer followed.

3. Declaration of interests

Conrad Benefield, Hon Secretary, referred members to the conflict of interest policy previously circulated, and to the interests previously declared. The following further interests were declared:

Mel Cramer: Employed by St John's as a cleaner

Sam Senanayake: Married to a St John's employee (Dal Hettiaratchi)

Grace Hopkins: Employed by St John's as maternity cover Youth and Student Pastor

4. Playbox update

Keith Malcouronne welcomed Playbox Supervisors Sian Williams and Sarah Merifield to the meeting, and Conrad Benefield advised he would be speaking as Interim Playbox Chair during this item.

Conrad, Sian and Sarah referred to paper PCC/19/23, highlighting the key points in each section.

Key discussion points were as follows:

- PCC members expressed great appreciation for the work of Playbox in caring for children and supporting families. It was agreed that Playbox is a 'good advert' and a 'big front door' for St John's, has strategic importance and generates a lot of goodwill.
- There are a total of 49 children on the roll currently at Playbox. Only 20 children attend in the afternoon due to limited space at lunchtime. There is a larger proportion of younger children and children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in the afternoons.
- Playbox is effective in reaching children and families from a range of cultural and faith backgrounds, but at the same time has a very clear Christian ethos and focus. Staff can and do talk freely about their faith, and about St John's, but do not evangelise or 'preach'. Playbox serves very different needs to day nurseries, which are generally aimed at parents working full-time, whereas Playbox offers morning and afternoon sessions.
- Connections with the rest of St John's are good; the Playbox nativity takes place in church and Playbox children join in the Light Party each October. Playbox has good connections with other church ministries, and refers parents to Playtime, the Sustain group (for children with SEND) and other ministries.
- It was noted that the outcome of the Ofsted inspection (with a 'Good' rating) was very positive, especially as the inspection had come at a difficult time with one Supervisor on sick leave and the other recently bereaved. The inspector had been impressed with the quality of teaching and care at Playbox, and the support given to families from different backgrounds, especially those with SEND.
- The areas for improvement (to achieve an outstanding rating) were limited and specific, namely some improvements to admin and HR processes and practice, increased use of technology toys and resources, and better tracking of cohorts. The team were in the process of planning for these improvements.
- Other areas of development that had been identified by Playbox itself focused on support for families, in particular for those families from other countries who are struggling with little or no support and may face cultural and language barriers, and young parents who also have children at school. The team are looking at ways to address this including an informal 'café' once a month, parenting skills support etc. Links are already in place with the English Language Café run by Linda Matthews.
- Conrad Benefield expressed his thanks and appreciation on behalf of the Playbox Management Committee to Sian, Sarah and the team for their consistent hard work and commitment to Playbox and the children and families it serves.

Conrad concluded by encouraging PCC members to pray for and support Playbox, adding that there was scope for PCC members to visit and volunteer, if they arranged this in advance with the Supervisors. He added that there would be a Ministry Focus on Playbox soon in the Sunday morning services.

Keith thanked Conrad, Sian and Sarah for their contribution to the meeting and for their commitment to Playbox.

5. Draft minutes of 25 March PCC meeting and minutes of 13 May Standing Committee meeting

The PCC minutes of 25 March were approved and the Standing Committee minutes of 13 May were noted.

6. APCM update

The draft minutes of the APCM were noted. Keith Malcouronne undertook to email some drafting corrections to Conrad Benefield, after which the draft minutes would be published on the St John's website and in church, with an encouragement to those who attended to review them and advise Conrad of any corrections.

Conrad advised that there had not been an election of sidespeople at APCM, and that PCC were therefore being asked to elect sidespeople for the coming year. It was noted that David Hassan had stepped down for the coming year and so was not standing for election.

PCC voted unanimously in favour of electing the following to serve as sidespeople for the coming year:

B Audsley	C Lawrence-Jones	C Peters
A Beer	P Lowther	A Redparth
S Beer	R Lyth	F Stubbs
J Bridgman	A Marshall	M Shirnia
M Brooks	G Martin	F van Huis
H Gain	C Matthews	D Watts
L Greaves	L Matthews	B Wheeler
S King	B McCance	M Whitehead
J Knowles	J Pearcey	G Wickes

7. Election of PCC officers

Keith advised that the following people had agreed to stand for election:

Vice-Chair: Keith Malcouronne

Honorary Secretary: Conrad Benefield

Honorary Treasurer: Chris Gray

Assistant Treasurers (2): Peter Gardner and Keith Malcouronne

Partnership Secretary: Lesley Pocock

Electoral Roll Officer: Veronica Cresswell

PCC representatives on Standing Committee: Joyce Johnson and Keith Malcouronne.

Keith added that by serving as a PCC representative on Standing Committee he would be able to continue to support Chris Gray (who had previously held this position) as Honorary Treasurer.

No other candidates came forward for these positions and PCC members voted unanimously in favour of electing the above persons by a show of hands.

Conrad Benefield, on behalf of PCC, thanked Keith for his service as Honorary Treasurer over the past 19 years.

Keith advised that the PCC had the power to co-opt additional members to ensure full representation of the church family (such as youth or student representatives) but no pressing need for co-options was expressed at this stage.

8. Safeguarding

Joyce Johnson, PCC Safeguarding Lead, advised that there were no safeguarding issues to report.

Conrad Benefield explained that PCC should review its Statement of Safeguarding Policy at least annually, and that Ceppy Hosegood, Safeguarding Officer for Children and Adults, had reviewed the Statement and advised no changes were required.

On this basis PCC members voted unanimously in favour of adopting the policy.

Conrad undertook to arrange for the statement to be signed and published.

It was noted that Safeguarding officers should visit Outbreak, and also be introduced at church services, so that people know who to go to if they have a safeguarding concern.

Joyce Johnson undertook to arrange this.

It was further noted that all PCC members were now required to complete DBS checks and undertake level 1 Safeguarding Training unless they had completed this recently, and that there was the option to complete the training online, or in a face-to-face session.

Conrad Benefield undertook to consult with Veronica Cresswell, who had written to some PCC members, and write further to PCC members about this, clarifying the requirements.

9. Finance

Keith Malcouronne presented the General Fund and Building for the Future accounts to 30 April, explaining that the columns showed the 2018 final outcome, year to date expenditure and income in 2019, the forecast final outcome for 2019, and the 2019 budget, adding that the aim was to achieve a balanced budget at the end of 2019.

Keith noted the following:

- Forecast income and expenditure had each risen by £10,000, which mainly reflected the Diocese of Guildford Growth Fund grant and a legacy, and funding of the Easter Centre Development Manager post.
- The budget for major maintenance items had been increased to take account of planned roof repairs, and Martin Chivers was putting together a report to assist in selecting the contractor for this work from two who had offered very different quotes.
- The majority of improvement works at 33 Grange Road would be completed in 2020.

Keith went on to refer members to paper PCC/19/29a which included an early draft balanced budget for 2020, noting that it included a further increase in Partnership giving and further fundraising for Building for the Future building on the planned autumn 2019 Gift Day, as well as expenditure and income arising from the Easter Centre Development Manager role.

Members noted the draft congregational update on the church finances which would pave the way for the autumn Gift Day. Members undertook to provide Keith with any further comments as soon as possible that week.

In discussion members noted that the budget was very tight, and that it was important for PCC and the wider church to understand the financial constraints that St John's was under. It was also noted that General Fund reserves were relatively low, reflecting the focus on fundraising for Building for the Future in recent years.

10. Consultation on term limits for Deanery Synod lay membership

Keith Malcouronne referred members to the briefing paper and consultation document, which set out a well-intentioned proposal to refresh Deanery Synod membership more effectively by setting limits on the number of terms that lay representatives can serve. Keith noted that Deanery Synods meet three times a year, so that even someone with six years of service is relatively inexperienced, and that being an effective member involves building relationships with other parishes and making connections, which take time. There was

general agreement from current Deanery Synod members on this, and it was noted that people sometimes remain on Deanery Synod for a long time because of a lack of other candidates.

Keith noted that a number of different options were set out in the paper, and that different arrangements might work for different parishes depending, for example, on their size – hence there were options which would enable APCMs to waive limits or decide on their own.

Keith proposed a response from PCC setting out its preferred options in order.

In discussion it was agreed to adjust this slightly to read as follows, and for Keith to feed this back into the process:

- d. Give APCMs the power to set their own limits for their parish
- g. Keep the present position of no term limits and leave it to APCMs to refresh their representatives at the time and with their most suitable people available
- b. No limit on successive terms unless the APCM resolves to impose such
- e. Give deanery synods power to choose whether to impose a deanery limit
- f. Give diocesan synods power to choose whether to impose a diocesan limit

And reject the following:

- c. Increase the proposed number of successive terms applied nationwide
- a. As the proposed new Rules provide, limit successive terms to two (six years)

Keith offered encouragement to all PCC members to attend Deanery Synod meetings, with the next taking place on Thursday 6 June, to gain an understanding of what they involve and stimulate interest in standing for election to Deanery Synod at the 2020 APCM.

It was noted that Paul Kahn was now a member of Diocesan Synod and so there was a vacancy on Deanery Synod.

Conrad Benefield undertook to look into how this vacancy should be dealt with.

11. Buildings maintenance

No new issues were notified aside from what was recorded under Finance above.

12. Forthcoming events

Conrad Benefield explained that for insurance purposes all St John's events taking place outside the St John's campus must be notified to PCC. He went on to advise that Outbreak would be going swimming and having a BBQ at the home of Ken & Jill Morgan, The Dell, Hurst Lane off Stroude Road, Virginia Water, on Saturday June 22nd, 6.00pm to 8.00pm.

There was no other business and Keith Malcouronne closed the meeting in prayer at 10pm.