

## MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

held on **Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2025**  
at 7.00pm in St Mary's Church

**Present:** Peter Reynolds, Bryan Jones, Mark Sanderson, Anne Morris, Mike Donovan, Julian Hallett, Rachel Lewis, Roy Milnes, Jane Rothery, Rosie Winyard and Caroline Pascoe.

**1 Opening prayers**

Caroline opened the meeting with prayers.

**2 Closed Churchyard**

to consider any issues for the attention of the Town Council - None

**3 Apologies**

to receive and accept apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Gerald Altree, Jean Brown, Paul Cummings, Freda Davies and Melanie Mellor.

**4 Safeguarding**

to receive an update and take any necessary action on any safeguarding matter

Judith presented her report.

- Apart from one risk assessment which is due, and training which cannot be done until the Diocese has produced its new C2 training programme, we are up to date with all training and checks.
- Annual review meetings for activity leaders and helpers will be arranged with the new Rector once he is in place.
- How we need to make information available to abuse victims and survivors will also be discussed at the next meeting
- Promoting a healthy a safe church culture will be considered when the new Rector is here.

Proposed: Peter Reynolds

Seconded: Bryan Jones

unanimous

**It was resolved** to approve the Safeguarding Action Plan as presented by the Safeguarding Officer.

*Judith left the meeting at 7.15pm*

**5 Minutes of the last meeting**

to approve and sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2025.

The minutes were unanimously approved and signed by the Vice Chairman.

**6 Faith, Hope and Love - Marks of Mission**

**Faith**

- i. arrangements for Lent have all begun and were noted:
  - Lent challenge and Eco Church events (see Love)
  - The Creed Deed – Sunday sessions with David
  - Lent Lunches on each Wednesday from 12<sup>th</sup> March to 9<sup>th</sup> April inclusive
  - Mothering Sunday Concert (30<sup>th</sup> March) – Border Belles and Youth choir with children and Dads providing tea for the Mums

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- ii. to note that St Mary's will be providing an Easter Experience for local primary schools on Monday 31<sup>st</sup> March and Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> April  
Anne explained that we have just the four benefice schools this year and plans are going well.
- iii. to receive an update on LifeLink and, Associate Minister at Walford  
Caroline informed the meeting that to date three applications had been received for the Life Link post though none for the Walford Minister. Candidates will be visiting the parishes on 31<sup>st</sup> March to look around (coinciding with Easter Experience). If anyone would like to volunteer to show them around the parishes, please speak to Caroline.
- iv. to receive an update on Mission Action Planning  
St Mary's is hosting a celebration to mark the end of the Church of England's "Thy Kingdom Come" initiative at Pentecost. It will be an ecumenical celebration and may lead to Ross becoming a Youth Hub which in turn could fund extra youth workers.

#### Hope

to note arrangements for VE Day commemorations, being co-ordinated by Paul Cummings and included:

- Tea dance on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> May
- Ringing bells for Peace on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> May
- Commemoration audio visual presentation on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> May

#### Love - Eco Church

- i. to receive an update from the group considering the Net Carbon Zero Report and progress with the A Rocha Gold Award

Rosie explained that we were well on the way to achieving a gold Award  
She had circulated the eco group's terms of reference and the group would be meeting on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> March and would report back to the next PCC meeting

Proposed: Rosie Winyard      Seconded: Peter Reynolds      Unanimous

**It was resolved** to agree the Eco group's Terms of Reference as circulated

- ii. to note the events relating to the environment during Lent and beyond:  
The following events were noted:
  - Lent Challenge – ECOcount your Blessings - we've given away over 80 leaflets  
Rosie asked if these could go online – Rachel agreed to arrange this
  - Exhibition – River in Peril – from 8<sup>th</sup> March
  - Concert – Love Letters to the River Wye – this was a lovely event bringing the state of the river to the fore in music. Sadly, it was poorly attended by church members though others did come and enjoy it.
  - Come, Sing & Sup – 16<sup>th</sup> March – 40 singers and 36 diners have booked
  - Tom Bullough – book talk and film – this will take place in May.

#### 7 Email Decision

to ratify a decision made by email **to resolve to support the nomination of Jane Rothery as a Local Missioner when 14 members were in favour.**

Proposed: Peter Reynolds      Seconded: Bryan Jones      10 for, 1 abstention

**It was resolved** to ratify the decision to support the nomination of Jane Rothery as a Local Missioner

#### 8 Deanery Pastoral Plan

to consider the Deanery Pastoral Plan (circulated on 15<sup>th</sup> January) and vote on whether the PCC supports the Plan, a decision to be passed to the Deanery Synod at its meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> March

Members had read the plan with interest and a discussion ensued.

It was strongly felt that at St Mary's, we are already doing much of what is suggested we should do in the plan.

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There was concern (and surprise) that there are churches with congregations of less than 10. It was felt that if a parish wants to keep its church building, it must make it both available and suitable for community use and bring the church back to the centre of each community. This should be one of the first priorities of the plan.

Finally, the deanery has an ageing, rural, population and both money and energy in the churches is in short supply. Engaging with young people is key to any success.

It was agreed that we should support the plan and the rural churches in our deanery.

Proposed: Roy Milnes      Seconded: Bryan Jones      10 for, 1 abstention

**It was resolved** to support the Deanery Plan as revised by the Deanery Synod Leadership Team and circulated to members in January 2025.

## 9 Arrangements for the arrival of the new Rector

- i. to receive an update on the Rectory heating and ratify a decision by the Standing Committee to pay up to £5,000 to fit a wood burning stove in the Rectory living room  
Mark had circulated a photo of the new fireplace and wood burner which had cost £3,844.  
The old fireplace is in the drive if anyone wishes to take it away.

The following points were noted:

- ii. Churchyard angels will be tidying the garden on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> April. This will include hedge cutting and lawn mowing.
- iii. The Rectory drive must be kept clear from 8<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> April, after which the new Rector will have moved into the Rectory.
- iv. FFF has suggested “bitesize” savoury and sweet refreshments (passed around on platters) to be brought by our congregation and wine/non-alcoholic alternative to drink for the licensing service on 30<sup>th</sup> April at 7pm – We anticipate a large group of visitors from Ludlow plus family and friends. Invitations need to go out shortly. These to include the Mayor and organisations in the town.

## 10 Finance Report

- i. to receive a report from the Treasurer and take any necessary actions  
The Treasurer reported that the office computer needed replacing. The other churches would also be asked to contribute to the cost.

Proposed: Roy Milnes      Seconded: Mark Sanderson      unanimous

**It was resolved** to approve the purchase of a new computer and support package for the office.

- ii to approve the accounts and authorise the Chairman of the PCC to sign them.  
The Treasurer informed the meeting that the auditor had signed off the accounts with no changes. He apologised that the correct version had not been circulated due to software issues. Once they have been signed by the chairman of this meeting, copies will be available online with a few hard copies.

Proposed: Peter Reynolds      Seconded: Roy Milnes      unanimous

**It was resolved** to approve the accounts and authorise the Chairman to sign them.

Roy had prepared a budget for the current year which showed a small profit for the year

Proposed: Roy Milnes      Seconded: Mark Sanderson      unanimous

**It was resolved** to approve the budget for 2025 as circulated.

## 11 Churchwardens' Report

- Kitchen sink - to receive an update on progress – nothing to report.
- Gable Cross - This has been completed and photos were available. The churchwardens were very pleased with the work which Alec Curtis had done.
- Sanctuary floor – Alec had repaired a small section of the sanctuary floor and would now give a quote to repair the entire area.

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- Boundary wall – a large section had collapsed between the car park and the open churchyard footpath. The wall is Grade II listed so will have to be repaired to its original state. Alec had quoted £8,000 to rebuild the five-meter stretch of wall. It was agreed we should get an alternative quote and go ahead with getting the required permissions. Barriers were felt to be needed to prevent any accidents and the churchwardens would arrange for these to be put up.

Proposed: Roy Milnes      Seconded: Mark Sanderson      unanimous

**It was resolved** to obtain a further quote and get the necessary permissions from the Diocese to rebuild the five-meter section of wall.

- Churchyard closure - to note that after exactly 12 months, Herefordshire Council has agreed that we can go ahead with the application to the Ministry of Justice to close the open churchyard.
- Interpretation panel on contested heritage – is done and in place.
- Unwanted visitors: We've been struggling for a couple of months with some children (about Y7/8) coming into church, usually late afternoons, mainly to charge a scooter then indulging in inappropriate behaviour while they wait. Please make sure all kitchen cupboards are locked and nothing is left out. We have camera footage and Bryan and Sue have reported this to the Police who have recognised the culprits and will come into the church whenever they (the police) are in the vicinity. A new lock is being fitted to the fridge door (*this was done on Wednesday, following the meeting*).
- Organ blower house door will need to be replaced, blowers need to be serviced

Proposed: Peter Reynolds      Seconded: Roy Milnes      unanimous

**It was resolved** to authorise expenditure to a maximum of £500 for a new organ blower house door and servicing the blowers.

## 12 St Mary's Hall

to receive a report

Peter reported that the committee will be installing secondary double glazing to one of the windows as an experiment for £500. They wish to check that it can be opened easily in the summer before installing it in the other windows.

There was discussion about heating in the hall and the possible use of an air source heat pump.

## 13 FFF Committee

to note that we have a full year's worth of events in planning and hope to raise £20,000.

- These include the Eco Count your blessings which should raise a substantial amount.
  - Lent Lunches (proceeds to the Mothers' Union Overseas' Fund)
  - Lunchtime concerts on the first Wednesday from April through to October
  - Kate Bliss (Bargain Hunt) in June to host an Antiques evening – Wednesday June 18<sup>th</sup> evening
  - h.Art and the Christmas Tree Festival will happen again in 2025
  - Plus concerts, a dance and talks
  - We continue to organise food and drink for Come, Sing & Sups and special events and services
- These were noted.

## 14 Health & Safety


to receive and note any concerns and take the necessary action

There was nothing to report.

## 15 Date of next meeting

The APCM will take place on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2025, preceded by a glass of wine and immediately followed by a short PCC Meeting.

The meeting closed with the grace at 8.14pm.

  
Rev. K. Price  
20/05/25  
KP