



**Minutes of the meeting of the Parochial Church Council held on
Monday 20 November 2023 at 8pm at SJs**

Present: Jonathan Ward, Rector Jessica Chick
Sally Munns Martin Pinnell
Sybil Andrew Lenka Ellmann
Jackie Barter Philippa Tagg
Jeff Seabrook Marc Bassot
Sarah Fletcher Julia Cernoch
Jeremy Tagg Felicity Mason

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Richard Ford, Penny Seabrook, Rachel Williams and Louise Stockdale

2. Prayer

The meeting opened with a short time of prayer.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2023 and matters arising

The minutes of the meeting were agreed. There were no matters arising.

4. Vision and Priorities

4.1 The Capacity Audit: Jon summarised the main findings from the recent "Busyness Questionnaire", which was completed by 82 church members:

- Only two respondents in the 18-30 age groups and only 14.6% aged 18-45; greater than 50% of respondents were in the 61+ age group.
- 65% felt they had little or no capacity to do more, a figure that jumps to 85% for those who are working.
- Only 2.5% had a lack of clarity about routes to be involved.
- ¼ of people said they were involved in 3 or more church activities per week, and 50% 1-2 per week.
- More than 60% of respondents say they experience anxiety intermittently or more regularly.
- If we assume some spare capacity, only 7% felt confident to take on leading roles, 47% in a supportive/helping role, with 70% saying they could help in one-off activities.

4.2 Follow-up from 16 October: Jon had circulated a summary of the points that had arisen from that meeting. He set these within the context of our overall vision and Looking Up, In and Out perspectives. We discussed priorities going forward without going into detail about how these might be delivered.

- Communications - particularly how information is dispensed, and not overlooking those who are not as IT savvy. Jon had made a number of updates to the website, replaced the TV screen in SJs / uploaded new images, and started producing a monthly 'what's on' programme but there remained the challenge of finding someone to take this area in the long term.
- Worship – Jon had already held a meeting with the Worship Team to discuss adjustments since the departure of Jonny Faint, as well as future developments and practice.
- Homegroups needed refreshing in some way; maybe breaking some up.
- Community Engagement.

5. Finance

The meeting noted the Finance Sub-Committee's report that had been circulated in advance.

Following the previous meeting, Jeremy had submitted the revised Pledge of £77k, supported by a letter from Jon. This had been accepted in a letter from Greg Prior, the Archdeacon of Croydon.

Concerning fees for 2024, these were agreed as circulated by Jon in advance of the meeting – the only noticeable change being an increase in the organist's fees for funerals and weddings.

As far as allocations were concerned, we noted those that had already been made in 2023, and agreed that we had sufficient funds to make gifts both to Link to Hope and Krupa Emmanuel. As far as 2024 was concerned, it was agreed to follow the same pattern of allocations, as proposed by Sally and seconded by Lenka.

It was agreed that the Christmas charities should be the Children's Society for Christingle, and for the other Christmas services we would give to support Christian Aid's work in Israel/Gaza (or a similar charity working in that area).

6. Safeguarding

Sarah said there was nothing new to report except that she was aware that they needed to do a little more to raise the profile of safeguarding in St John's.

7. Families' Worker – Louise Stockdale joined us by phone for this item

There was discussion around how Miranda was settling in. The PCC recognised that it was early days, but there were some points for Jon to feedback to redirect some of her energies. These included:

- Ensuring a clear focus on young people and their families – she had shown a strong desire to engage with the community, but sometimes this seemed to have strayed

outside of her chief area of concern;

- Not allowing production of resources, etc to come at the expense of 'relational ministry', whereby she gets to know the young people and their needs;
- Seek feedback and collaborate with parents/leaders to ensure materials produced are age appropriate and don't fall into the trap of feeling like more 'homework' for the young people. It was felt that while Miranda could not be faulted for her enthusiasm and energy, she appeared to be more focussed on the production of paper resources for the children rather than spending much time getting to know them better. It was noted that as Miranda was not a teacher or had children herself, much of the material was in any case aimed at a higher age group. Jon would feed this back to Miranda.

On a separate but related issue, Jeremy and Marc had met to look into the possibility of seeking funding for the Family Worker position. They had identified five or six possible funders, and the first application would be submitted in January.

8. Christmas Programme

It was noted that there would be a quick turnaround at Church between the Christmas Workshop on 16 December and the Carol Service on 17 December.

The cards advertising our Christmas services would be available the following Sunday for members to take and distribute.

9. Churchwardens' Update

Felicity and Jackie had circulated a report in advance of the meeting.

The biggest issue in the report was the problem caused by Plusnet moving from analogue to digital. The matter had not yet been sorted; we still had no WIFI; and as our alarm is connected to the phone line, we currently have no working alarm at the church. The Wardens set out two proposals from ADT regarding necessary changes to our alarm system. We all agreed to the second option (proposed by Julia and seconded by Philippa), at a cost just under £1500 with a monthly charge of about £14.

We noted that we were paying teenagers for litter picking in the Churchyard and immediate area. It was agreed that we should effectively make this an annual arrangement and open it up for any other interested party in July/August – Jeremy to note for 11 June 2024 PCC meeting.

10. Pews in the North Aisle

Sarah and Stuart Talbot had agreed to take this forward and would be reporting on their findings in due course.

11. PCC dates 2024

Jon would circulate these after the meeting

12. PCC Christmas meal

It was agreed that this would be an Indian takeaway at the Rectory on 11 December.

13. Any other business

It was noted that Alpha was going well, although as it was online, those attending were not based in our immediate area.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 23 January 2024.

Signed

Date: