

Otley Parish Church.

Minutes of Parochial Church Council Meeting held on Monday 6th January 2025

Glynis Milner opened the meeting in prayer.

Present: Allan Boddy, Barry Milner, Ken Dale, Eric Cairns, Tom Raper, Norman Barr, Glynis Milner, Rosemary Ellen, Tony Pike, Maggie Lolashvili, Jackie Hird, Reverend Aaron Kennedy, Reverend Stewart Hartley

In Attendance: Jenny Liston

1. **Apologies:** Martin Hird; John Simkins

2. **Safeguarding**

2.1 Jenny had circulated details of a Christian charity called 'Restored' which supports female victims of domestic abuse. It was noted that their literature did not mention male victims. Jenny will contact the charity for further details.

2.2 Jenny had circulated a draft of a proposed safeguarding questionnaire primarily intended for users of the building (Rascals, Open House etc)

Allan suggested that it should include something to the effect of 'Do you know how to raise a concern?' Tony suggested that the questions needed to be more 'open' to allow fuller responses. Jackie commented that some people will always answer that they feel excluded in some way. Maggie suggested that we should include an opportunity to give examples of when respondents felt unsafe. Jenny thanked the group for their comments and will redraft the questionnaire.

3. **Minutes of the meeting held on November 25th 2024**

The minutes were approved, proposed by Norman Barr and seconded by Tony Pike, passed unanimously.

4. **Matters arising not on the agenda**

4.1 Aaron commented that it seemed unclear whether the proposed Year 6 intervention plan had been approved. Allan clarified that it hadn't been approved. Allan reminded the meeting that All Saints was not a faith-based school but was local authority maintained. It was agreed that we should offer the plan to All Saints and to Westgate School as the two schools where we already have a relationship through Open the Book.

4.2 Security issues: No issues during the recent Christmas holidays.

4.3 Communications Team

4.3.1 Ken had circulated before the meeting a paper detailing the costs and benefits of the Hubb system and the proposed implementation plan. After further discussion, particularly regarding the ongoing resourcing of using and managing the system, it was proposed by Aaron, seconded by Rosemary, that we should proceed with the project.

4.3.2 Church logo. Des O'Hara is willing to help with this and will come forward with his proposals.

5. **Events**

5.1 Christmas Services – Tom reported that the new approach to Christingle following the Risk Assessment had worked well, people had been happy to sit in the Parish Room and follow the service on the screen and it had only been necessary to turn away a few people at 4pm. They were given a Christingle

orange and accepted that the building was full. Aaron expressed his thanks to Jackie and Colin for deputising at short notice due to his illness.

Allan commented that some of the words for carols during the Christmas services were unfamiliar. Ken said that we used the Mission Praise versions, if other lyrics were required, we need to let the person setting up the laptop know which book we plan to follow. Allan suggested that we should use the Oxford book of carols.

5.2 PCC Away Day – January 18th at Norwood Chapel between 9am and 2.30pm

6. Finance Report

6.1 Prior to the meeting Tony had circulated a report to the end of 2024.

Total income for general use for 2024 was £174,254, compared to spending of £198,792, a large deficit of £24,500 but £14,000 lower than budgeted. All figures presented were provisional, pending confirmation of some of the estimates.

Regarding Wedding Fees, Jackie commented that as couples book well in advance it is probable that the fee will have increased when they are asked to pay. Most of these are Statutory Fees, not at the discretion of the PCC, and not known until very late in the prior year.

It was agreed that Aaron will discuss with Sarah to let couples know that the fees would normally be increased by inflation in the following year.

6.2 Meeting with Ecclesiastical Insurers. Tony has circulated the report. Main issue is the importance of Risk Assessments for all church activities so that we can demonstrate we have taken all possible steps to minimize any risks. We contacted the insurers and took advice over the phone on the R.A. for the Christingle services.

6.3 The Minutes of the decision taken by the Standing Committee on December 15th 2024 regarding the repair to the sump pump were brought to the attention of the full PCC

7. Properties

7.1 Carbon Net Zero

7.1.1 Phasing of the project is up for discussion; Feasibility Study has been forwarded to the Diocese for comment.

7.1.2 Funding Strategy – an 'expression of interest' has been raised with the Lottery Fund, Trevor is dealing with this topic.

7.1.3 Presentation to the congregation – timing to be agreed with Aaron.

7.1.4 Energy Audit – the team were disappointed with the report, to be discussed with Lisa from the Diocese.

7.1.5 Statement of Significance and Need has been shared with our Architect. Carl has suggested a few amendments, when these are complete the latest version will be shared with Lisa at the Diocese.

7.1.6 The CNZ group proposed the purchase of a footfall monitor at an estimated cost of £100 to give a fuller picture of the usage of the building in the week.

7.2 Allan had circulated the correspondence regarding a lady who had fallen when exiting the churchyard via the gate onto Burras Lane (with the single step), Kevin Keefe is continuing to pursue the matter with the council. One suggestion was that the step could be painted with suitable paint to better identify the step edge.

7.3 Any other business – the willow tree has been damaged during the recent winter weather, Tom has contacted tree surgeon.

8. Youth and Children’s Ministry – see Minute 4.1

9. Reports – no other reports received.

10. Community / Churches Together – Prayer Walk arranged for 21st January.

11. Any Other Business

11.1 Finding a second Church Warden – Aaron is aware that this is an active issue although Tom is being supported by the Wardens Team. PCC members were asked to consider and pray about this issue.

11.2 E mail from Anthony Walker about a blue plaque for Elizabeth Garnett. The correspondence about this had been circulated. A blue plaque will be installed on the wall behind the Navvies Memorial, when the date is agreed we can make refreshments available for the unveiling. Anthony has suggested that a suitable memorial inside the church would be appreciated, Stewart commented that gaining approval for a new memorial could prove difficult.

12 Prayer at next meeting – Aaron

Glynis closed the meeting with prayer.

Date of next meeting – February 10th 2025

Dates for PCC Meetings in 2025:

January 18th PCC Away Day

February 10th

March 24th

May 12th

May 18th APCM.

June 23rd

July 21st

September 8th

October 13th

November 24th