

**Minutes for the meeting of the PCC of Milborne Port held on
Tuesday 23rd January 2024 in Church House at 7pm**

The meeting opened with prayer.

Present: Chair: Rev. Rona Stuart-Bourne (RSB); Nicki Edwards (NE). Jacquie Hall (JH), Linda Mumford (LM), Paul Springett (PS), Harold Clarke (HC), David Johnson (DJ), Richard Redman (RR), Graham Sharpless (GS), Susan Wales (SW)

Apologies - David Grant, Trevor John, Amanda Mackintosh (AM)

[Mary Clothier, Pat Elliott, June Goodman, Louisa Hughes]

Approval of Minutes of Meeting held on Tuesday 28th November 2023 – there was one amendment as highlighted by NE and PS: Ronnie and June Goodman’s hours are 12 hours per week, not 10 hours per week as previously stated in the minutes. The minutes were then signed as a true record, by RS-B.

Matters Arising – NE had met with Goodmans and clarified their hours and workload. RR and PS: the loose collection from the services held at St John’s amounted to £584.50, (inclusive of Gift Aid), and this has been donated to Christian Aid.

RSB thanked everyone for being so kind during her recent period of incapacity, and urged everyone when asked, to say that she has some not so good days but overall she is well.

Goathill PCC – It has become increasingly apparent, particularly over the last twelve months, that there are insufficient individuals to stand as officers or members of the PCC of Goathill. The present treasurer is due to stand down, so this is another post that will be vacant. Consequently it is not now possible for Goathill to be run as an autonomous parish, although everyone involved is keen to keep the church running as it is, but under the umbrella of the PCC of St John’s. There will still be a separate Churchwarden, and representatives from Goathill will stand on the PCC of St John’s. RSB has consulted Peter Evans, Assistant Diocesan Secretary, and this will be possible although it could be a time-consuming process as all parties will have to be consulted and in agreement. There were no objections from the floor. It was proposed by NE, seconded by JH, that the process for this change should be initiated. All were in favour.

Prayers of Love and Faith – All members of the PCC had been sent the letter from Bishop Michael, dated 13th December 2023, in which he explained the position of the Diocese on the use of Prayers of Love and Faith for couples in a covenanted friendship, and for those in a same sex relationship. Copies of the document containing these prayers, as commended by the House of Bishops as being suitable for use by ministers in exercise of their discretion under Canon B 5, had also been sent for perusal. Bishop Michael has worked hard to offer ways in which our Diocese can move forward, with the present situation being that individual parishes can “opt in” to the use of these prayers. Some Dioceses have already started using the prayers. RSB has met with other Deanery incumbents, and explained that there are different ways of dealing with this, and outlined her own position, namely: “love is love” and that too many hearts are broken due to church intransigence. A discussion followed, with various points of view being aired, and with the majority of those present keen that we should “opt in” to using the prayers. RSB will make an announcement in church to

inform the congregation to this effect. RSB suggested that a vote as to our way forward be taken after Easter. However, all were in agreement that, as a PCC, we are keen to be seen as taking a clear stance in these circumstances, and that the majority were in favour that we would, as a parish, opt in to using Prayers of Love and Faith as they stand. The matter will be further discussed at the APCM. Charlton Horethorne has agreed in principle.

Milborne Wick – In the absence of AM, there was nothing to report. However, PS reported that they have paid their share of benefice expenses in full.

Deanery Synod – Nothing to report. However RSB noted that the Deanery is losing the Assistant Area Dean, Tristram Rae Smith, in August. There are vacancies arising at Henstridge and Wincanton with the departure of the present incumbents, but, despite these impending vacancies, the proposals for reorganisation remain unchanged.

Finance update – PS provided up to date copies of the Balance Sheet and Fund Movement Summary for perusal. We are in a healthy position financially, and all costs have been covered for the year. The accounts are almost ready to be independently agreed by the independent accountant.

Flagon: The Church owns a large, silver flagon, dating from c.C17th, and which is of some considerable value, but, because of its size and value, will most likely never be used. For many years it has been held for safe-keeping at NatWest in Yeovil, the annual charge for which is £45pa. The suggestion is to remove it and pass it to the Treasury in Wells for long-term safe-keeping. However there is some uncertainty as to whether it is still held in Yeovil, and it will be therefore necessary to a) ascertain its whereabouts; and b) arrange to collect it to transfer to Wells. It was proposed by Harold Clarke, seconded by David Johnson, that this should be done. All present were in favour. SW will contact NatWest in the first instance arrange this.

commercialservicesteam@natwest.com [ACTION SW]

Parish Giving Scheme (PGS): the paperwork and information to give the congregation to inform them of how this operates has now been received. The scheme is to be introduced/launched at beginning of Lent.

New Photocopier: the existing photocopier, which the church owns, has become temperamental. To aid efficiency, the leasing/purchase of a new machine from the Parish Buying Scheme was discussed. It was agreed that Helen Solomon should explore possible replacement machines and the costs involved and report back. [ACTION PS/NE/JH/HS]

Agreement of fees for memorial services: Because there is no body or coffin at a memorial service, as cremation of the deceased has previously taken place, there are no fees coming to the church when this service is held. RSB feels that this type of service should be treated the same as funeral service. PS advised that there is indeed a set CofE fee, but will clarify.

PS concluded his update by explaining how the Fund Movement Summary and Balance Sheet work. PS is about to close the NW General account, (one of the reasons for needing to move the flagon) and explained historic reasons for operating more than one account. With only one account, this will streamline Benefice finances. Using Fund Accounting software, PS explained how the finances

are now easier to operate. The accountant will extract the relevant information and use it to produce the necessary report for the APCM. NE thanked DJ for his continued assistance to PS.

Fabric update -

Quinquennial Report update: nothing has been forthcoming.

Heating update: The Gas boiler is now operating following a few issues due to the damp weather. A quote has been received from Herschel regarding the installation of infrared heaters: £9500 for the Lady Chapel (which would also necessitate in rewiring). The quote for the rest of the building amounts to c.£50K, resulting in the need for faculties, large installation costs, as well as 3 phase electricity. RSB asked if we could fundraise, and NE suggested costing the whole project, to include re-wiring. **[ACTION JH]**

JH reported that she had received a quote from Jim Brooks Electrical to supply and fit 28 LED high level flood lamps; 1 6ft batten for new fitting LED; 20 bayonet cap LED lights; 2 external LED floodlights and labour. The estimate, if completed in one day is £1485 + VAT. It was proposed by Harold Clarke, seconded by David Johnson, that this work should be carried out. All in favour.

[ACTION JH]

Sound System update – with grateful thanks to Tony Thorp (TT) for all his work in investigating the issues with the sound system, it transpires that most of the existing equipment is working well. However in 2014 the government bought back the frequency the church transmitters work on to implement 4G and digital TV. It is now illegal to operate in these frequencies, and could be why there are issues with the sound quality on occasion. We therefore need to buy new wireless microphones, the cost of which will be approximately £500, to correct this. The hard-wired microphones are unaffected. It was proposed to proceed and advise TT to purchase the necessary equipment, namely two new lapel microphones and one new hand-held microphone and their associated base receivers.

RSB left at 19.54

Website update – set a date for next meeting – interested parties – **Monday 12th Feb 7pm CH** – contact others. GS has succeeded in assuring the hosting company that the church is a charity, and that we will be hosted free of charge from now on.

Safeguarding - NTR

Health and Safety – All fire extinguishers have been serviced.

Electoral Roll – GS reported that an annual Certificate is needed and that he has already dealt with this. Charlton Horethorne and Goathill will also need to do this. He will email Trudy West and Charlie Beney to inform them and suggest they do similar. GS will update the Roll shortly.

RS-B/Vision – RSB thanked everyone for the work that they do for the church. She has completed her piece for the APCM report. The February Vision Day has been cancelled/postponed until the other three parishes have joined the Benefice. The Lent course will centre around ‘The Message Bible’ by Eugene Peterson and will entail reading all 150 Psalms over 40 days, with a meeting once

a week in one of the five churches to discuss what has been read. This will be a real discipline for everyone to read 60 verses a day. Details will be in the Magazine. Toomer Tree Services are meeting with RSB on Saturday 27th January, and will be handing over cheque to add to church funds from the proceeds of shredding the village Christmas trees.

AOB -

Foodshare: all is working well, but more helpers would be welcome.

Tithe Map of Milborne Port: JH reported that when the loft in the old Vicarage was cleared, a box was found containing an old tithe map of the village. It is one of six copies made, with the possible original being held in the Somerset Records Office. It will be handed over to Nathalie Hetherington of the History Society (possibly on the village History Day on 11th May) for long term loan and safe keeping in the village museum.

Review of Advent services including publicity for carol service: GS expressed his concern that a) there was insufficient advertising for St John's Carol Service and that b) there was a clash with services held at Goathill and Charlton Horethorne on the same day. NE emphasised that the timings for all the services are considered carefully, and that there were many people who attended the carol service at St John's who were not part of the usual congregation. The idea of reinstating the sending of a village Christmas Card detailing all the services and co-ordinating with the Spirit of Milborne Port in the delivery thereof was suggested.

The meeting closed at 20.43 with The Grace.

Dates of next meetings:

- Tuesday 12th March – to agree accounts ahead of the APCM
- Saturday 20th April – APCM 3pm – to include a cup of tea etc
- Monday 20th May – This will need to be changed as it clashes with the meeting of the History Group
- Monday 23rd September
- Tuesday 19th November